

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA

A COMMEMORATION VOLUME

1967

LORD BASAVĒŚVARA

SOME OPINIONS:

Men of Śrī Basavēśvara's stature truly set a model for other human beings; and by following the footsteps of such religious masters, devoted men of God are bound to realise the delights of spiritual experience.

JAYACHAMARAJA WADIYAR

Śrī Basavēśvara lived his life divinely, fearing none and hating none. To a society petrified into castes and creeds, he came as the great deliverer, preaching oneness and equality, equating the pariah with the brahmin and the bearer with the prince. All were equals in the eyes of God and comparative greatness was one of proximity to God. Greatness did not depend on the accident of birth or caste. He thought of human society as a democracy of souls with inherent respect and affection for all. His introspection was a solar gaze beneath which all flaws and follies withered away. The inner man in him and the outer were one and the same. It is only the integrated man — with his heart, mind and will pointing to the same star — that can be universal Man.

VINAYAK KRISHNA GOKAK

In Basava's philosophy we find a confluence, a harmony and a synthesis of the three aspects of human personality — thought, feeling and action (*Jñāna*, *icchā* and *kriyā*). Only all these three elements have been transformed, transmuted and chastened in Basava, so to say.

M. YAMUNACHARYA

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA



Śrī Saṅgamēśvara Temple—Kūḍalasaṅgama (Bijapur Dt.)

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA

EIGHTH CENTENARY
COMMEMORATION VOLUME

GOVERNMENT OF MYSORE
BANGALORE

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PREFACE

India has been the birth place of great men. Śrī Basavēśvara occupies a very high place among them, being a great mystic saint, poet philosopher, religious leader and social reformer of the twelfth century. He preached universal brotherhood and practised equality. He decried caste distinction and championed the cause of the down-trodden people. In fact, he ushered in a new way of life which was truly based on "socialistic pattern". Śrī Basavēśvara has been held in high esteem by the people of all castes and creeds; and is regarded as an epoch-making personality. He practised whatever he preached in his *Vachanas*. In the words of Prof. K. S. Srikantan:

"It is no exaggeration to say that the message of Śrī Basava is like a reservoir into which all previous thoughts flowed in and from which all later thoughts flowed out. Kind like Buddha, simple like Mahavir, gentle like Jesus, bold like Mohamed, Basava strikes us almost as a wonder of creation. But, what attracts us most to him are those teachings of his in which he anticipated the greatest of modern thinkers — Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi".

It has been the policy of the Government of Mysore to honour great sons and daughters of India by commemorating them. In accordance with this policy, the Government of Mysore have constituted a State Level Committee, with Sri S. Nijalingappa, Chief Minister of Mysore, as Chairman, to celebrate the Eighth Centenary of Śrī Basavēśvara. On this memorable occasion the Government of Mysore have brought out this volume as also two other books in Kannada on the life and sayings of Śrī Basavēśvara, with the collaboration of the Basava Samiti of which my friend and colleague Sri B. D. Jatti, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, is the Chairman. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Sri B. D. Jatti, Members of the Basava Samiti and the scholars who have contributed their best to this noble cause.

The Basava Samiti set up an Editorial Board with Sri S. S. Wodeyar, Registrar, Karnatak University, Dharwar, as Chairman, for preparing a Commemoration Volume in memory of the Eighth Centenary Celebrations of Śrī Basavēśvara. The Government of Mysore also, in consultation with the Basava Samiti, set up an Editorial Sub-Committee with H. H. Sri Shivakumara Swamiji of Siddaganga Mutt as Chairman and Sri M. P. Patil, Ex-Revenue Minister, Government of

Mysore as Convener to prepare, after due research by co-operating and collaborating in the efforts of the Editorial Board of the Basava Samiti, an outline. The idea was that the publication should be an authoritative document coming out of the efforts of the experts who have thorough knowledge of the various aspects of Śrī Basavēśvara's life and work. The result has been the present commemoration volume which is being presented to the general public by the Government of Mysore. It can be said that it is a research work and scholarly document on the different aspects of Śrī Basavēśvara, his life and mission. I take this opportunity to express my grateful sense of appreciation to the Editorial Board of the Basava Samiti and also to the Editorial Sub-Committee of the State Level Committee.

We owe our thanks to Manipal Power Press and its team of employees who have worked under the able guidance of Sri Mohandas Pai and Sri Satish U. Pai who are the Partner-Proprietors. Our thanks are also due to Sri B. Krishnayya, Manager of the Press for his sincere co-operation and hard work in executing the printing of such voluminous nature within as short a period as six weeks, maintaining the excellent standard and quality of workmanship.

I have also to express gratefulness to my three friends Sri Shantesh C. Patil, Secretary; Sri G. M. Hiremath, Jt. Secretary and Sri M. Sadananda Rao, Treasurer of the State Level Committee. I am aware of their great pains and hard work in making the Eighth Centenary Celebrations a grand success and in assisting the State Level Committee, especially myself in bringing out this volume as also other publications on Śrī Basavēśvara by the Government of Mysore.

It would not be out of place if I were to say that it was Sri B. D. Jatti, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Mysore and Chairman of the Basava Samiti, who first mooted the idea of holding the Eighth Centenary Celebrations of Śrī Basavēśvara and bringing out publications on him. I am sure this volume which is in the hands of the readers will be properly appreciated as the thought and philosophy of Śrī Basavēśvara are as much readily applicable to the modern times as they were vitally significant in the twelfth century. It is true that the name of Śrī Basavēśvara has not so far been very widely known out side Karnataka. An attempt is now made to present to the world a true picture of this great soul.

Before concluding, I must mention that the Eighth Centenary Celebrations of Śrī Basavēśvara and also the other publications on him would not have been possible without the munificence of the Government of Mysore, especially of the Chief Minister, Sri S. Nijalingappa, without whose support and encouragement nothing worthwhile would have been possible.

S. R. KANTHI

WORKING VICE-CHAIRMAN, STATE LEVEL COMMITTEE
EIGHTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF SRI BASAVESHVAR
GOVERNMENT OF MYSORE

VIDHANA SOUDHA
BANGALORE
23RD JANUARY, 1968

INTRODUCTION

We have great pleasure in presenting this commemoration volume to our readers on the occasion of the inauguration of the Eighth Centenary Celebrations of Śrī Basavēśvara in Delhi. The publication of the volume is one of the items of the celebrations planned on a nation-wide scale. The Mysore Government and the Basava Samiti deserve to be congratulated for the interest evinced and the help and support extended by them towards the celebrations to commemorate this great son of India. Among the programmes planned to mark the occasion, the publication of the commemoration volume is an event of great significance as this volume will carry the message of Basavēśvara far beyond the frontiers of India. The idea of bringing out this volume was first mooted by the Basava Samiti. The State Level Committee for the Eighth Centenary Celebrations of Śrī Basavēśvara, later approved of this idea and appointed an Editorial Board for bringing out the volume. The enthusiastic support of both these bodies has enabled us to bring out the volume in good time for the celebrations. The Editorial Board would like to place on record its appreciation of the interest shown and support extended by these bodies from time to time.

Śrī Basavēśvara stands out as one of the most outstanding personalities in the religious history of India. He dominates the scene across the centuries like a colossus. His life and teachings have been a source of inspiration to millions of people in South India for the last nearly eight hundred years, and influenced and moulded their lives. He revolted against the rituals, superstitions and distinctions of caste and creed encouraged by the decaying Hinduism. The society was dissipated by a system of hierarchy of castes and creeds, and rituals had their Sway. Women were treated like chattel. All this was perpetrated in the name of religion and a few selfish people sought to perpetuate these evils in order to retain their supremacy in the set-up and to exploit the common man for their

self-aggrandisement. Basavēśvara revolted against these reactionary forces. He renounced Brahminism being disgusted with all the reactionary customs and practices it encouraged and revived the Vīraśaiva Dharma, which he adopted and put it on a broad base, founded on the principles of justice and equality for all mankind stripped of all narrow considerations. He resurrected the status of woman as an equal of man in all respects. He brought about a social revolution to restore the status of man in all his human dignity, considering all men from all walks of life equal in the fellowship of service by preaching the dignity of labour through his philosophy of 'Kāyaka'. He provided a firm social base in Vīraśaivism on which the society of mankind could be organised — free from man-made distinctions of any kind and the resultant bickerings. He brought about a revolutionary change in the contemporary society with remarkable success. A mass of newly awakened mankind surged towards him to form a community imbued with high ideals and a zeal for better life, which in a brief span of time attained a level of culture, of which any country could be proud. When we think of Basavēśvara we are reminded of personages like Christ, Buddha and Gāndhi. He had something of all these in him. He couched his teachings in simple verse forms of rare felicity in Kannaḍa — known as 'Vacanas', which are nothing but the spontaneous out-pourings of the deep-felt feelings of his rich and sensitive mind. They are in the language of the common man, simple, unsophisticated and elegant, but at the same time, embodying noble ideas and the highest truths of religion. The greatness of these vacanas is that they can touch the hearts and minds of even the humblest of men. Their verbal suppleness, their simplicity and felicity of language have endowed them with a cadence and an appeal rarely achieved by poetry in any language. This form of literature was adopted by many Vīraśaiva Śaraṇas and saints belonging to other faiths, in later time. Thus as a pioneer of this literary form, Basavēśvara has left an indelible mark on the history of Kannaḍa literature. He anticipated Mahātma Gāndhi in propagating the idea of the up-lift of Harijans and the tenets of Sarvodaya and Dr. Schwietzer in his advocacy of reverence for life in any form. The greatness of Basavēśvara lies in the fact that he lived up to every word of his teachings. It is on account of his lofty ideas and great revolutionary change he brought about in restoring human dignity to down-trodden mankind that Basavēśvara lives in the minds of men even today and will continue to live as long as mankind exists. Because of the fact that his writings are in Kannaḍa his teachings, his religious and mystical experiences have to a very great extent remained confined within the narrow limits of Kannaḍa region. His thoughts and message deserve to transcend the barriers of language and reach the corners of the world. It is mainly with this idea that the publication of this commemoration volume was undertaken. It is only proper that on an occasion like this, the various facets of his personality, his work and achievements should be made known to the

restless world of today which badly needs the soothing influence of the teachings of the type embalmed in his 'vacanas.'

The volume is divided into six sections. The first section contains the biography of Basavēśvara. The second section contains articles dealing with the message and philosophy of Basavēśvara in general. The third section contains articles comparing Basavēśvara with the other great saints and founders of important religions of the world. The fourth section is a collection of articles comparing Vīraśaivism with the different religious faiths in India. The fifth section contains articles on the life and teachings of Basavēśvara, as depicted in other Indian languages, and also dealing with the important places pertaining to Basavēśvara's life etc. and the sixth contains a bibliography of works on his life and teachings. Having evolved this broad pattern, we approached scholars from all over the country to send atricles dealing with the topics to fit into this pattern. The response was very heartening. We are grateful to all the eminent scholars for sparing their valuable time to prepare their articles.

We are grateful to the Government of Mysore for their generous financial support towards this publication without which a literary undertaking of this magnitude would have been well nigh impossible. In the planning and execution of this project, we had throughout the sympathetic support and encouragement from Hon'ble Shri S. Nijalingappa, Chief Minister of Mysore, Hon'ble Shri B. D. Jatti, Minister for Food and Chairman of the Basava Samiti, and Hon'ble Shri S. R. Kanthi, Minister for Law and Working Vice-Chairman, State Level Committee. Without their co-operation and guidance at every stage the volume would not have seen the light of the day. Shri Shantesh Patil, Director, Film Unit of the Government of Mysore, and Secretary, State Level Committee has throughout evinced great interest and has given valuable suggestions from time to time in the preparation of the volume. The aesthetic embelishments of the volume are all his. The Secretary of the Basava Samiti, Shri Annadanaiah Puranik has been keenly interested in the project from the beginning and has steered it through difficult situations at various stages and rendered valuable assistance and guidance throughout in the execution of the project. In the actual editing of the volume, I have received the most unstinting help from Shri H. P. Malledevaru of the Department of Sanskrit of the Karnatak University. In fact, he has been the main-stay of the editorial work of the volume. Mr. A. S. Theodore, Rtd. Assistant Station Director, All India Radio, has rendered valuable help in touching up the articles which needed improvement in the matter of expression. Equally helpful have been the services of Shri Kumbhar, Librarian of the Karnatak University Library in preparing the index. Dr. G. S. Amur of the English Department of the Karnatak University and Shri S. R. Gunjal, Librarian of the Karnatak College,

have been extremely helpful in the preparation of the biographical notes of the contributors. Shri S. M. Angadi, Shri Sanganna Kuppast and Sri S. R. Gunjal have borne the brunt of correcting the proofs, checking the accuracy of the quotations and generally supervising the printing work. Our thanks are also due to the Director of Public Instruction, Bangalore and the Director of the State Institute of Education, Dharwar for sparing the services of Shri S. M. Angadi for this work. The Manipal Power Press has done an excellent job of printing and get-up of the volume within a short period of six weeks. On behalf of the Editorial Board I extend to all these persons our most heart-felt feelings of gratitude. We the members of the Editorial Board are thankful to the State Level Committee and the Basava Samiti for the trust and confidence reposed in us in entrusting this responsible work and deem it a privilege for it has given us an opportunity to render our humble bit of service to the memory of this great son of India for whom we have the profoundest respect and devotion.

KARNATAK UNIVERSITY
DHARWAR
20th December, 1967

SADASHIVA WODEYAR

CONTENTS

SECTION : SIX

MESSAGES

PRESIDENT
INDIA
NEW DELHI

Among the galaxy of eminent Savant-Saints of India, Lord Basavēśvara can legitimately claim a pride of place by virtue of his distinguished services in the field of Kannada Literature and humanitarian activity. His saintly, philosophical thought embodied in the illustrious 'Basava Vachanas' has enriched Kannada Poetry. The 8th Centenary Celebrations of Lord Basavēśvara will, therefore, be hailed on a nation-wide scale.

I send my best wishes for the success of the 8th Centenary Celebrations of Basava.

ZAKIR HUSAIN

VICE-PRESIDENT
INDIA
NEW DELHI

I am glad that the Eighth Centenary celebrations of Basavēśvara are being celebrated. The Vachanas of Basavēśvara show how progressive and enlightened a spiritual leader he was. There is an urgent need to propagate his message of peace and universal brotherhood, and the celebrations contemplated is a signal step forwarded in our efforts to promote unity and harmony not only among our countrymen but among all human beings.

V. V. GIRI

PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Lord Basavēśvara is one of the great saints who heralded social change in mediaeval India. He stressed devotion and intellect. He expounded his profound ideas in the common speech, charged with power and beauty. He stressed the equality of man in the eyes of his Maker.

On the eighth centenary of Lord Basavēśvara, I offer my salutations to the saint and reformer.

INDIRA GANDHI

EX-PRESIDENT
INDIA
NEW DELHI

I am glad to know that the 8th Centenary Celebrations of Lord Basavēśvara are being organised on a grand scale. He was a great saint and social reformer and we should try not merely to express our appreciation of his valuable teachings but to put them into practice in our daily life.

S. RADHAKRISHNAN

THE PALACE
MYSORE

The idea of publishing a volume containing learned articles by well-known scholars of repute from all over India, in commemoration of the 8*th centenary celebrations of Lord Basavēśvara, is indeed a laudable one. Basavēśvara, eradicated untouchability which had spoiled the fair name of India's culture by his advocacy of welcoming all devotees of Śiva into Vīraśaivism irrespective of their caste, creed or birth. He advocated the noble ideal of wishing well of all living beings and emphasised the importance of work, which is of fundamental importance in the building up of a nation by proclaiming that 'work is heaven itself'. Basavēvara created in the society of his times a sense of dignity of labour. Himself a firm believer in acting according to his own precepts, he tried to transform the ordinary men and women into Godly human beings through his vachanas which are couched in simple and elegant language, wherein he emphasised the value of adherence to truth, Humility and Good actions, Faith in God and respect for women and purity both internal and external. Eight hundred years ago, Basavēśvara anticipated the idea of* 'Sarvodaya' *enunciated by the father of the nation — Mahatma Gandhi who worked for the welfare of the whole of humanity. May this volume which contains learned articles on the various facets of the genius of Basavēśvara, his life and achievements, by erudite scholars, win the acclaim of all people.*

JAYACHAMARAJA WADIYAR

RAJ BHAVAN
CHANDIGARH

I am very happy that the State Level Committee for the 8th Centenary Celebrations of Śrī Basavēśvara, is bringing out a commemoration volume on the occasion. Basavēśvara was one of the greatest religious social revolutionaries of all times. He revolted against the tyranny of distinctions of caste and creed advocated by the followers of Varnaśrama Dharma. He refused to make any distinction between people following different vocations. Work according to him was sacred. It was he who for the first time, advocated the philosophy of dignity of labour. Work, he said, is heaven itself. Himself an embodiment of all great human virtues, he strove for the uplift of the down-trodden. He was a man of far-sighted vision. He anticipated the great teachings of Mahatma Gandhi in the ideas of Harijan uplift, Sarvodaya etc. He thought that no sacrifice was too great to eradicate the caste system, selfishness and hypocracy. Like all other leaders of religions, he was influenced by the contemporary religious, social and political trends and realised the supreme need of the unity of all people in the country, irrespective of their religion, caste and creed. The present is the time when the life and teachings of Basavēśvara should be made known throughout the country. His teachings and his inspiring leadership, had a tremendous impact on the life of the whole of South India for centuries. It is a pity that almost all his teachings and philosophy are to be found in the works and writings in Kannada language, which is spoken by just about four per cent of the Indian people. It is necessary, therefore, that they should be made known throughout the country. In this direction, the commemoration volume is a very laudable effort. I am glad that eminent scholars from all over India, have contributed to the volume, articles dealing with the life and teachings of Basavēśvara. I am sure the volume will be widely read and will serve as a beacon light to the people all over the world.

D. C. PAVATE

CHIEF MINISTER (MYSORE STATE)
AND PRESIDENT,
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
BANGALORE

We are celebrating the Eighth Centenary of Śrī Basavēśvara, a poet, a philosopher and more than all a Social Reformer who was very much in advance of his age. The Kannadigas are grateful to him for rendering the highest thoughts in a language easily understood by the masses in the form of 'Vachanas'. He was a pioneer in the particular field of literature by giving it new life, new vigour and new orientation. But we have the highest respect for the achievements as a Social Reformer and revolutionary. He worked unceasingly for the equality of the sexes and emancipation of womanhood and for economic and social equality. He also worked against exploitation on the basis of birth or religion or caste and against violence in any form. He abhorred parasitic existence. According to him, one who lived by the sweat of his brow, be he even a sweeper, was entitled to the highest respect if he but rendered his duty to society honestly. His three sayings—'ದಯವಿಲ್ಲದ ಧರ್ಮದಾವುದಯ್ಯಾ; ಕಾಯಕವೇ ಕೈಲಾಸ; ಅಯ್ಯಾ ಎಂದೊಡೆ ಸ್ವರ್ಗ. ಎಲವೋ ಎಂದೊಡೆ ನರಕ'' *are highest ideals and hold good for all time.*

I have a feeling that what all is written as history about him may not be true to facts. Whether he was Prime Minister or in charge of the finance of Bijjala's State, is not of much importance. We have to revere him for what he preached and practised. That he was responsible for celebrating the marriage of a Brahmin girl and a Harijan boy in the period he lived in, is an indication of the courage of his conviction. Possibly he paid the price with his life. His death is shrouded in mystery.

I hope this celebration of his Eighth Centenary and publications being brought out in that connection will spot-light the main aspects of his teaching and philosophy so that they may inspire people now and for all time.

S. NIJALINGAPPA

PRESIDENT
INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
NEW DELHI

Lord Basavēśvara is one of the greatest saints, poets and philosophers that have lived and taught for the redemption and uplift of the souls of their fellow-beings during the 4-5 *thousand years of record of Indian History. He belonged to that inspired band which enriched culture and civilization and religious faith of India. To my mind his greatest achievement was to knit a large community into an integrated whole with a common faith and common philosophy irrespective of caste or class. It will be my hope that the commemoration volume will serve to recall a sense of Lord Basavēśvara's teaching so that the process of integration of the nation will be reinforced and the objective which Basava Vachanas sought to promote is attained successfully.*

C. D. DESHMUKH

VICE-CHANCELLOR
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAR

I feel happy to learn that the State Level Committee for the Eighth Centenary Celebrations of Śrī Basavēśvara has decided to publish a commemoration volume to mark the occasion. Śrī Basavēśvara is one of the greatest saints and social reformers the world has seen. His devotion to God and compassion for all living beings were boundless. He revolted against the man-made distinctions of caste and creed perpetrated by 'Varanaśrama Dharma' and conceived in Vīraśaivism a casteless society, where every one was treated equal. He envisaged a society, in which every human being was expected to work. He enunciated this principle through his philosophy of 'Kayaka', *according to which, a person who does not work, is not entitled to his bread. "A man engaged in honest labour", he said, "need not worry about worshipping God". "Work itself is heaven", he said, "and there can be nothing more sacred than work". He also admonished those who wanted to hoard, and said that man should not keep anything for tomorrow. He was thus the precursor of the idea of socialism. The greatness of Basavēśvara lies in the fact that he practised what he preached. By his teachings and by his example, he brought about a social revolution in society, which had a great impact on the life of millions of people for centuries. In the present days of tension between different castes and classes of society, Basavēśvara's teachings have a special significance. It is, therefore, befitting that the State Level Committee is publishing the commemoration volume in English, which will carry the message of Basava to a large number of people across the world. I hope people will study and imbibe the spirit of his teachings and find solace and inspiration for nobler life.*

A. S. ADKE

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN
CHAUPATTY ROAD
BOMBAY - 7

Śrī Basavēśvara, the great saint, poet and philosopher of Karnataka, occupies a very prominent place among the mystics and religious reformers of Bharata. He was born at a time when society was riven by political upheavals, social schisms and religious animosities. Confused and confounded by a medley of opposing creeds and doctrines, people were drifting towards atheism.

Śrī Basavēśvara restored faith in God and inculcated the spirit of service. He revolutionalised thought and brought about a synthesis of approach in matters religious and spiritual. He preached the message of universal love and brotherhood, right conduct and devotion to God and spread the doctrine of social equality and untouchability. Basavēśvara is considered as the father of Kannada prose and his Vachanas *contain the quintessence of Upanishadic teachings. He laid great stress on action and held "work is worship" as enunciated in his Vachana* "Kayakave Kaiḷasa".

May his teachings continue to inspire the minds and hearts of our countrymen, for such spiritual awakening and faith in Moral Order alone can impart vitality, strength and stability to our nation.

K. M. MUNSHI

Late Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar

"DELISLE"
OOTACAMUND

I am glad to learn that in connection with the 8th Centenary Celebrations of the great saint Basava, a commemoration volume is being published. Śrī Basava was one of our famous path-finders and he will always be remembered for his strenuous work for the uplift of the Hindu communities and for their elevation and equalisation.

I wish the celebrations and the publication of the souvenir all success.

C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR



Śrī Basavēśvara

SECTION : ONE

You've come to do the work
That I have come to do;
I've come to do the work
That you have come to do;
Allama Prabhudēva has come
To do the work that you and I
Have come to do...
And so, in a few days,
Kalyāṇa was a lamp,
I was the oil,
Second-in-command the wick,
Prabhudēva was the light of it.
However, the lamp is broke,
*The oil is dry, the light extinct!**

***English rendering by A. Menezes and S. M. Angadi—Published by Aṇṇana Baḷaga Sirigere, 1965**

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA : A BIOGRAPHY

"History is but the biographies of great men" said Carlyle. Although this may be somewhat of an over statement, nevertheless, it would not be difficult to concede that the high water marks in history would not be possible without the impact made on it by the lives of great men. It is in response to the challenge of life situations that history is made, and in the process great personalities emerge. Truly, the hour calls the man and the 12th century witnessed one such hour in Karnāṭak. The fabric of society had begun to show up many signs of weakness and instability which could directly be traced to the inherent confusion in belief and the consequent low ebb of spirituality.

The Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa who were ruling this part of the country from 972 A.D. were responsible for its many sided development. Rulers like Vikramāditya VI who flourished during this period gave the country its highest reputation. Kalyāṇa, the capital of Cālukyas, was described as a city, the like of which was rarely seen on this earth.[1] The statement was not without an element of truth. Reminders of Vikramāditya's great era are still with us. Art, Literature, Sculpture, all received generous patronage during his rule. The heroism of the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa has been celebrated in a large number of inscriptions belonging to this period. But the fate of a country like that of an individual has its own ebbs

1 Nāsīdasti bhaviṣyatikṣititale kalyāṇa kalpaṁ puraṁ — vijñāneśvaraḥ mitākṣara

and tides. The Cālukyan dynasty which gave rise to a king like Vikramāditya VI also produced a weak ruler like Taila III who came to the throne in 1151 A.D. The Cālukyan empire had many feudatories such as Kalacuris of Tardawāḍi, Śilāhāras of Karahāṭaka, Sindhas of Yalaṁbarge, Kadaṁbas of Goa, Cōḷas of Niḍugal, Pāṇḍyas of Ucchaṅgi. Even the Hoysaḷas were one of the feudatories of this expansive empire. Of these, the Kalacuris of Tardawāḍi played an important rôle in the political activities of the empire. The Kalcuris were related to the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa by ties of blood for over three generations.[2] Of the several Kalacuri families that migrated from the North (Kāḷañjara Pura), that of Tardawāḍi had kings with vaulting ambitions like Permāḍi and Bijjaḷa, who were also directly related to the Imperial family. Permāḍi, the father of Bijjaḷa, particularly appears to have been extremely ambitious. This fact seems to come out clearly from some of his inscriptions which describe him as an emperor.[3] Permāḍi's son, Bijjaḷa, was even more ambitious than his father, and he could make the dreams of his father come true. It was at this juncture that the Cālukya family had a very weak ruler. The subtle and scheming Bijjaḷa had direct access to the royal family ever since his boyhood, as his mother came from that family. Bijjaḷa had ample opportunity, therefore, to observe the political situations very keenly and make his own shrewd calculations.

Bijjaḷa was the Mahāmaṇḍalēśvar of Tardawāḍi since 1136 A.D.[4] when young and weak Taila III ascended the throne in 1151, he had (manipulated) manoeuvred in order to be the Mahāpradhāna at Kalyāṇa and have all powers in his own hands, reducing King Taila III in his scheming almost to a nonentity. Naturally the other feudatories of the empire also got busy hatching similar schemes. Bijjaḷa, an able and brave warrior, had apparently no difficulty in

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2 Vaḷasaṅg Inscription. B. K. No. 128 of 1942.

3 Muttage Inscription, "Inscriptions in Northern Karnāṭak and Kolhāpur State." p. 42 — and also please ref. Tadaval Inscription B. K. No. 111 of 1929-30.

4 Taṁbūr Inscription — Hero-stone at K.R.I., Dharwar.

dealing with such insurgent plotters against the Emperor. Probably it was on account of this that Taila was beguiled to trust and unsuspectingly tolerate even the questionable activities of Bijjaḷa. This was exactly what Bijjaḷa wanted. The reins of the empire virtually passed into the hands of Bijjaḷa. When Prōla of Voraṅgal, one of the feudatories, declared his independence in 1155 A.D., Bijjaḷa did not take any action, and so, Taila himself marched against him, only to be defeated and made a captive. However, he was not beheaded, since he was the emperor. It appears Bijjaḷa had deliberately planned that this kind of situation should arise in the country. Emperor Taila being thus vanquished in 1155 A.D. could not naturally go back to Kalyāṇa, and hence, moved from place to place in order to find shelter as far away as possible from Kalyāṇa. This was the opportunity for Bijjaḷa to usurp the Kingdom. He however carried on the administration in the name of his absent master, for he knew it was practical wisdom to gain the good-will of the people in order to rule the country in peaceful harmony. Inspite of his treacherous action towards the Emperor, he had managed to keep control over all the feudatories by placing his own trusted men, wherever possible, in key positions. His suspicious mind could not naturally allow any of the feudatories to enjoy the freedom which they were used to in the past. But it must be said that all the while he was seeking for a man who could command not only the respect of the people but also keep them happy. To his great good fortune Bijjaḷa as well as all the people discovered no less a divine person than Basavēśvara as available.

The social and religious conditions that prevailed in the country at that time also cried out for a great reformer like Basavēśvara. Śaivism which was a dominant religion of India had begun to proliferate into sects. Some of them were following heinous and horrible practices which were repugnant to the tenets of the faith. The Kāpālikas and some other Śaiva sects were of this kind. These Śaiva sects had deviated considerably from the bounds of real *bhakti*. The following saying of Cannabasavēśvara will give a picture of the sad state of the Śaiva faiths at that time:

"The Śaiva is astounded;
The Pāśupati cannot find a true path,
The Kāḷāmukhi is blind
And Mahāvrati is arrogant
The Sanyāsi is an atheist and
The Kaula is mad
These six cannot fit in the Bhakti Mārga."[5]

Some of them like the Śuddha Śaivas and Pāśupatas, however, were striving to keep to the real *Bhakti Mārga* (The path of true devotion). But they were few and far between.

The Vaidika religion with all its sub-sects was deeply engrossed in the Karma Mārga. Animal offering in the sacrifices was rampant.

The herds of sheep are emptied by the so
called Vaidikas in the name of sacrifice[6]

Religion had ceased to have any relevance to day to day living. The futile discourses at the philosophic level and the meaningless hold of Karma and fatalism at the religious level could lead the followers nowhere. A true seeker of truth and a religious devotee could not find any meaning or solace in the Vaidika religion then. Religion could not speak to the heart of the common man who is after all the nucleus of the culture of a country.

Jainism and Buddhism had come to Karnāṭak preaching a new message of Salvation to the people. These religions were pacific in their outlook and upheld non-violence as against the violent sacrifice of the Vedic religion. They were really successful at the beginning and had attracted a large number of followers all over the country. Buddhism came to Karnāṭak, as it went elsewhere, and left its impact on the life of the people. King Aśōka's rock-cut edicts are found in the heart of Karnāṭak even today in places like Koppaḷ, Siddāpura and Maski. Lord Buddha's foot-prints are found on the Koppaḷ hills. Excavations as well as further research

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5 Cannabasavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu: vaɔana No. 545.
6 Brahmaśiva: Samaya Parīkṣe XIV. 124.

in various branches of culture are likely to shed much light on the impact which Buddhism had on Karnāṭak culture. It could be said without any hesitation that Buddhism was a living religion in the 12th century and continued to wield some influence even as late as 14th or 15th century. But the history of Buddhism clearly indicates that it had passed its nadir and fallen into decadence in the medieval period. The Buddhistic Vihāras which were the abodes of the nuns and mendicants had lost their original reputation for high moral values.[7] Having forgotten the genesis of the religion and the belief it espoused, the Buddhist bhikkus simply became the begging mendicants in the streets. How can a religion, however genuine and lofty its principles, survive when its followers lose the sense of morality and encourage parasitic dependence on somebody else's earnings? It was principally on account of this, great religion as it was, Buddhism could be brought down by other religions like the Vedic. So it was that its influence was on the way out in Karnāṭak when other religions like Jainism were seriously seeking a foothold.

Jainism had stepped into the heart of the Karnāṭak round about 3rd century B.C. It proved a fruitful source for enriching the Kannaḍa language, literature and culture. For centuries Jainism was the most predominant religion in Karnāṭak. Religion to be true should be free from all kinds of contentions and strifes for the good of mankind. But when kings and queens and royal dynasties intrude into its domain even the great religions become corrupt by human cupidities and meet their downfall. This happened to Buddhism as well as to Jainism. Jainism, a protagonist of non-violence, had to fight wars and, contrary to its principles, indulge in violence in order to uphold its blind faith. The history of Karnāṭak as well as that of South India bears ample testimony to this fact. By 12th century A.D. the Jain writers and the followers of Jainism lost all tolerance for other religions, and the writers started producing satiric literature

7 The luxuries and comfortable life led by some of the monks had shaken the confidence of the people. — History of Medieval India p. 30.
Carnal passions of man found a religious sanction in some of the tenets of Buddhism and the result was a looseness of sexual morality — The Cultural Heritage of India p. 48.

condemning other religions.[8] Intolerance in itself was a positive proof that weakness had set in and that it was no longer sure of its own belief. The learned Jaina paṇḍits were engaged in establishing the supremacy of their faith resorting to the Syādwāda, the sevenfold doctrine. The natural inference, therefore, is that there was no longer any harmony between religion and philosophy. Philosophy drew its meagre sustenance from a demonstration of dry discourses, and religion became a mere form without the spirit.

What then was the total impact of all these religions on the life of the common man? Society, it appears, was divided into almost as many sects as there were individuals. The innumerable sects were following their own codes of conduct which was congenial neither to the progress of the individual soul nor to the advancement of society.

The Cālukyan empire was vast in its size, Tardawāḍi being almost at its centre. Like the political upheavals, the socio-religious awakening also rose from the same source, Tardawāḍi. It appears that orthodoxy had reached its zenith at the time, in this area. To quote a few instances, it was in Tardwāḍi[9] some of the noted agrahāras were in existence. Bāgawāḍi, Muttage, Iṅgaḷēśvara, Maṇigavaḷḷi were within the radius of about ten miles and were the abodes of the learned Brahmins belonging to various Śaiva faiths. It was true that there were learned paṇḍits of a very high order. But the religion they preached appears to have been saturated with meaningless rituals and their spirituality consisted in a blind belief in Karma. It was at this juncture and in this area that the great divine power was to appear as a saviour of mankind.

Basavēśvara, was born in Iṅgaḷēśvara Bāgawāḍi,[10] now in the Bijapur district, midway between Maṇigavaḷḷi (Managūḷi) and Muttage. Mādirāja and Madalāṁbe[11] were the parents of Basavēśvara. Madirāja was the Chief of Bāgawāḍi. He is very often

8 Nayasēna: (1112 A.D.) — Dharmāmṛta;
9 Brahmaśiva: (1130 A.D.) — Samaya Parīkṣe.
10 Pālkurke Sōmanātha: Basavapurāṇamu: I. Bhīmakavi Basava Purāṇa: I. 2.45
11 Mādarasa, Mādāṁbe, Madāṁbike, Madalāṁbike are the other variant forms of these names.

described as 'Grāmaṇīmaṇi'[12] 'Puravarādhīśvara'[13] and these terms were very often used to designate the rank of chieftans. It is rather strange that the inscriptions so far traced in and about Bāgawāḍi do not make any reference to Mādirāja. In one of the inscriptions of Maṇigavaḷḷi[14] we have however a reference to 'Mahāprabhu Mādirāja'. But it has been clearly shown by scholars[15] that this Mādirāja was in no way connected with Basavēśvara, though in the same inscription reference to Basava also is found. Basavarasayya of Maṇigavaḷḷi inscription was the son of Candirāja and Candrāṁbike. He belonged to Kāśyapa Gōtra and Vāji Vaṁśa. Dr. Fleet however speculates that this Basava might have been the one connected with Vīraśaivism.

It is found from the other literary references to Basavēśvara that neither Candirāja and Candrāṁbike were his parents nor did he belong to Kāśyapa Gōtra. Basavēśvara on the other hand is said to have belonged to Kammekula[16] and Sāṅkhyāyana Gōtra.[17] Depending upon this inscription a fantastic identification of Basavēśvara and Kasapayya was made by some writers.[18] But in the light of an inscription[19] of 1172 A.D. where Kasapayya has been described as a scheming treacherous man, this could no longer be accepted by scholars. The glowing description of Basavēśvara as a pious and religious man in Maṇigavaḷḷi inscriptions[20] might have obviously tempted the scholars to take cognisance of the Maṇigavaḷḷi inscription as an authentic reference to Śrī Basavēśvara.

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12 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa I.2.46.

13 Arjunawāḍa Inscription: E. I. 21, p. 9

14 E.I. Vol. V. p. 9 to 31

15 Vīraśaiva Vol. III No. 11,12.

16 Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe 1. line 98.

17 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa V. 12.

18 Śrī Basavēśvara Kālavicāra.

19 Halasūr Inscription: Śāsanaparicaya by P. B. Desai.

20 Parahitadoḷ parākramadoḷārpinoḷūrjita śaktiyoḷ mahēśvarapadabhaktiyoḷ tanagepāsaṭiyārperāreṁba hemmeyoḷ neredu maṇiṅgavaḷḷiyadharāmarapañci-śatānurāgapaṅkaruhavikāśabhāskaranenalnegaḷdiṁ Basavaṁ guṇākaraṁ v. 26.

Some scholars seem to subscribe to the view that Mādarasa and Mādalāṁbe were only Basava's foster parents in support of which an account of Nandi Āgama is cited. It is said in this work that the child Basavēśvara was found in an ear of corn by Madirāja and Mādalāṁbe. This they have taken to mean that Mādarasa and Mādalāṁbe were the foster parents and that Candirāja and Candrāṁbike of Maṇigavaḷḷi inscription were the real parents of Basavēśvara. The work under consideration is recent and lacking authenticity. The Maṇigavaḷḷi inscription as shown above may not be relating to Basavēśvara. Great poets like Harihara, Pālkurke Sōmanātha and a band of others who followed them, clearly write that Mādarasa and Mādalāṁbe were the parents of Basavēśvara. To clear this cloud of doubt there is a contemporary vacana which states, 'Can he be called the son of Mādirāja and Madalāṁbe?'[21] The spirit of the vacana is that these Śaraṇas were not mortal beings. Parents such as Mādirāja and Mādalāṁbe might have been only earthly instruments for his passage to maturity whereas in fact he descended as an incarnation from Paraśiva. Whatever be the philosophical interpretation, the vacana makes it clear that Mādirāja and Mādalāṁbe were the parents of Basavēśvara.

The most authentic inscription of Arjunavāḍa regarding Basavēśvara and his parentage describes him as the son of Mādirāja.[22] It can be taken, therefore, as an irrefutable fact that Mādirāja and Mādalāṁbe were the parents of Basavēśvara. This Mādirāja was also called Maṇḍige Mādirāja.[23]

Mādirāja and Mādalāṁbe were the devotees of Nandīśvara at Bāgawāḍi. The Basava Purāṇas relate that Mādalāṁbe observed Nandīvrata to have a son who could elevate the family to salvation.

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21 Ghaṭṭivāḷayya Vacana: 'Maṇḍigeya Mādirāja Mādalāṁbeyara basuralli bandanennabahudē Basavēśvarana?'

22 Mādirājana tanujaṁ.

23 Pālkurke Sōmanātha: Basava Purāṇamu I. p. 11.
Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa II. 46.
Siṅgirāja: Siṅgirāja Purāṇa VI. 24.
Śivatattva Cintāmaṇi XXXVI. 1.

It was to fulfil her desire that Nandi himself, it is believed, was born of her as Basavēśvara. While the purāṇas mention that Akkanāgamma and Basavēśvara were the only children of Mādirāja and Mādalāṁbe, the Arjunawāḍa inscription mentions the name, Dēvarāja Munipa, as a brother of Basavēśvara. The family of Basavēśvara appears to enjoy great reputation and prestige in all respects — father was the Chief of Bāgawāḍi, mother a religious devotee, brother a saintly person, and sister a seeker of a new religion.

It was in such a family that Basavēśvara was born around the year 1131 A.D. This is the generally accepted date for Basavēśvara's birth though there are different views on the matter. Lakkaṇṇadaṇḍēśa in his work, Śivatattva Cintāmaṇi[24] gives Basavēśvara's date of birth as in the month of Kārtika of Siddhārtha Saṁvatsara. This, according to Swāmi Kannupiḷḷe's ephemeris, works out to be A.D. 1139 November 7. But this appears to be based on a different calculation of the Saṁvatsaras current in South India, according to which the above references would fit 1131 A.D. as the date of Basavēśvara's birth. Some of the Kālajñāna Vacanas support this view.[25] Arjunawāḍa inscription mentions the date of Hāla Basavidēva as 1260 A.D. He is the fourth in the genealogy.[26] At the rate of 25 years for a generation which is normally accepted by historians, 125 years would have to be deducted to have the birth date of Basavēśvara as (1260-125). This also will come to about the same period *i.e.*, 1131.

As regards the month, Śivatattva Cintāmaṇi mentions Kārtika,

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24 30.11 Siddhārthisaṁvatsarada kārtika śuddha paurṇami Sōmavārada madhyarātri

25 Kālajñānada vacanagaḷu p. 41. Ed. by Dr. P. G. Haḷakaṭṭi. Bijapur 1934.

26 Mādirāja
- Dēvarājamunipa
  - Kāvarasa
    - Kalidēvamunipa
      - Hālabasavidēva
- Saṅgana Basava

while Siṅgirāja Purāṇa[27] says Śucirmāsa (Âśvija). Vyāsokta Saṁskṛta Basava Purāṇa[28] gives some details in this respect. This has been calculated as Vaiśākha Śuddha Tṛtīya Rohiṇi Nakṣatra. The sum total of the evidence is that Basavēśvara was born on Vaiśākha Śuddha Tṛtīya, in the year 1131 A.D. the nakṣatra being Rohiṇi.

However, some scholars[29] have taken the birth date of Basavēśvara as 1106 A.D. in support of which they quote two vacanas of Muktikaṇṭhābharaṇa,[30] Nirañjana Vaṁśa Ratnākara and Śaraṇalīlāmṛta.[31] Regarding the vacanas of Muktikaṇṭhābharaṇa a different interpretation is possible. According to these vacanas Basavēśvara would have stayed on in Kalyāṇa for 36 years which does not appear to be plausible since Bijjaḷa was not in Kalyāṇa around 1131 A.D. in any capacity. From the point of time the other two works are recent when compared with Śivatattvacintāmaṇi. The above conclusion therefore seems to be reasonable regarding the birth date of Basavēśvara on the strength of Śivatattvacintāmaṇi and Vyāsokta Saṁskṛta Basava Purāṇaṁ.

In a traditional Brāhmin family like Basavēśvara's all the rituals must have been performed meticulously. As a child, Basavēśvara might have been curious about these rituals. He might have seen the idols of gods being worshipped at home by some one or the other of the family.[32] And the various karmas were performed mechanically. This must have aroused his curiosity. All such rituals must have impressed his enlightened mind as meaningless.

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27 V. 59 Śucirmāsa (āśvijamāsa) śuddha caturdaśiya makaravāra himakarārdastha śivayōgamāḍire.

28 Mīnasthitēbhṛgoḥpetrē Maṣasthe ca divākare
Tulāsthitē ca tatputrē karkaṭasthe bṛhaspatau
Śaśāṅke rohiṇī saṁsthe makarasthe ca bhūsute
Śiśorardhodayejātē lagna karkāṭa saṁjñike
Basava Purāṇa Ch. IV. St. 34.

29 R.C.C. Carr: Monograph on Lingayats, p. 3.
E. Thurston: Caste and Tribes of India Vol. IV p. 239.

30 Nos. 224, 256.

31 Chapter 20.

32 Basavēśvara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu: No. 182 and 183.

The boy Basavēśvara seems to have also come across real *Bhakti* either at the house of some of his relatives or at the Nandi temple in Bāgawāḍi. It may be guessed that Basavēśvara's mother came from Iṅgaḷēśvara near Bāgawāḍi for Baladēva, her brother,[33] has been described in one of the works[34] of fairly historical significance as having hailed from Iṅgaḷēśvara and as such Basavēśvara is likely to have been born in Iṅgaḷēśvara. The exact birth place of Basavēśvara may be located as having been near Iṅgaḷēśvara from where the Palanquin is brought after due pūja ceremony every year at the time of the festival. Basavēśvara would naturally have moved from his father's place to his mother's often.[35]

Iṅgaḷēśvara then appears to have been under the strong impact of Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara. The cave of Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara is still to be found there. Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara was certainly against the vedic religion. A new wave of real *bhakti* could be seen in the Mahāmane of Iṅgaḷēśvara as against the Karma rampant in the Agrahāra of Bāgawāḍi. Baladēva and Mādalāṁbe might have been brought up in this new atmosphere and their home might have been an abode of Śiva Bhakti.[36] Thus the child Basavēśvara might have grown and been nurtured in the atmosphere of real *Bhakti* at his mother's place right from his birth.

Basavēśvara by birth was a genuine devotee and a seeker after truth. As if to indicate this, it is said that a great Śaiva Saint by name Jātavēdamuni[37] came from Kūḍala Saṅgama to Bāgawāḍi to bless the child Basava as soon as he was born. He stayed in a temple. As a child, Basavēśvara might have visited the temple which might have been a centre of true devotion at that time. The present Nandi temple at Bāgewādi almost resembles the one in the Kūḍala Saṅgama with the Śivaliṅga as the guardian deity. The

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33 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa. III. 86.

34 Bhairavēśvara Kāvyada Kathāmaṇi Sūtra Ratnākara.

35 The distance between Bāgewāḍi and Iṅgaḷēśvara is hardly six miles.

36 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa III 86.

37 Siṅgirāj Purāṇa: V. 33.
Basava Purāṇa says Saṅgamēśvara himself came to bless the Child III. 25—28.

temple is described by local people as that of Saṅgamēśvara. This indicates some connection between Kūḍala Saṅgama and other such temples of Saṅgamēśvara in that area of which one was that of Bāgewāḍi. These temples might have been the centres of real *Bhakti* where worship of Liṅga might have been done without any external ostentation. Basavēśvara as a child might have heard devotees pouring their hearts out in their rapturous songs which moved him. His mind thus was inclined to this kind of Śiva Bhakti, as he was being brought up in that atmosphere at his grandmother's place.

The boy Basavēśvara was eight years old. Preparations for his thread ceremony were made. Basavēśvara could not agree to the ceremony at all. The father and son disagreed on the issue. The boy Basava's argument was that he was already invested with Liṅga at the time of his birth[38] and the Liṅga worship and Brāhmanical rites like yajñopavīta could not go together. His father seems to have been adamant as he insisted that Basava must undergo the thread ceremony. When forced, the boy discarded the whole ceremony and left home, thus severing all his relations with his father and the family.[39]

The narration of this incident is not the same in all versions of the biography of Basavēśvara. Harihara, one of the few authentic biographers of Basavēśvara, writes[40] that Basavēśvara lost his parents early in his childhood and was brought up by his grandmother who was as it were matured into ripeness of Śivabhakti. The thread ceremony according to Harihara was over and the boy, being in an atmosphere of devotion at his mother's place, could however have no attachment to that kind of formal worship. At the age of sixteen,

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38 Mādarasa and Baladēva might have been Ārādhya Brāhmins. The Ārādhya Brāhmins wear both liṅga and yajñopavīta. Baladēva's family must be tending to liṅga worship alone while that of Mādarasa was dominated by Karmamārga. This explains how and why Basavēśvara was initiated with liṅga at the time of his birth.

39 Pālkurke Sōmanātha: Basava Purāṇamu 1.16.
Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa. III. 43.

40 Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe: II. 1-10.

when he could discriminate right from wrong, he discarded the sacred thread and left home. This account of Harihara is solitary, as most others like Pālkurke Sōmanātha uphold the view that Basavēśvara did not undergo the thread ceremony at all. Harihara's account may seem to be rationalistic but it has its own defects to be authentic. If Basavēśvara had discarded his thread at the age of sixteen, there was no reason why he should leave home and cut off relations with his family. His further account in the Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe is that he left home for Kūḍala Saṅgama. A young man of sixteen who had realised, all by himself, the path of true devotion would have no need to leave home but stay on and follow his new path. The dramatic situation of his leaving Bāgawāḍi and proceeding to Kūḍala Saṅgama has been emphasized by all the biographers including Harihara. In one of the *ragaḷes*[41] of Harihara it is stated that Basavēśvara left home at the age of eight discarding the thread ceremony. Harihara seems to have heard two different versions of the incident in the course of his long life and given expression to them. But since there is no support, this account of Harihara as found in Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe cannot be accepted at this stage. At the same time it is difficult to accept the other account. It does not stand to reason that a boy of eight could have such a strength of will and courage to leave home. This is a point raised by rationalists. The only answer to this point is that for a precocious boy of divine powers nothing was impossible. There are instances in the world where gifted boys have displayed such precocity. In the Tamil country one of the four important Nāyanārs was said to have been an eight years old boy. Another point is that the ceremony itself might have taken place a little later when the boy Basava would have better understanding. Some biographers of Basavēśvara have tried to reconcile the two views. Siṅgirāja whose attitude was that of resolving the divergent views states[42] that the thread ceremony was in fact gone through by him. Basavēśvara had indeed the sacred

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41 Basava Pavāḍada Ragaḷe

42 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa V. 81—83

thread on his body. But he wanted to discard it soon after. His parents could have agreed to his views but pressed that he should not tear it. They would have no objection however if it was let to wear itself out.

One fact remains clear, however, that Basavēśvara left his home for Kūḍala Saṅgama. Whether he had undergone the thread ceremony or not may be a point for debate. But it cannot be gainsaid that he discarded the thread at one stage. A large number of works on the biography of Basavēśvara hold the view that he would not undergo the ceremony when the same was arranged at the age of eight.[43] It was in that conflict that he left home. This appears to be credible. Siṅgirāja's account[44] that the boy, Basavēśvara, left home as a result of being pursued by brāhmins when a brāhmin boy fell into a well while at play, does not find place elsewhere. It is, therefore, difficult to believe such fiction.

Basavēśvara left home for Kūḍala Saṅgama. But he appears to have spent some time at the Mahāmane, (Great House) in Iṅgaḷeśvara Bāgawāḍi, where the Bhaktas welcomed him as soon as he left his home for good.[45] The first soul that gave him the courage of conviction and moral support, was his sister Nāgalāṁbe.[46] The Mahāmane where Basavēśvara found solace appears to be around his grand mother's place in Iṅgaḷēśvara. Very soon Basavēśvara left home for Kūḍala Saṅgama as his inner urge was to find solace at the feet of Saṅgamēśvara. We have already seen how there might have been some connection between Kūḍala Saṅgama and other Saṅgameśvara temples which belonged to a school of Mahāmane as against those of Agrahāras. Munis like Jātavēda might have been visiting these places now and then. The child Basavēśvara and his sister, very likely, might have found some such saints to lead them

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43 Pālkurke Sōmanātha: Basava Purāṇamu I. P. 16—19.
Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa III. 43—86.
Ṣaḍakṣaradēva: Basavarāja Vijayaṁ.

44 V. 91-100.

45 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa III. 84.

46 Basava Purāṇa III. 84.

to Kūḍala Saṅgama. The distance between Bāgewāḍi and Kūḍala-Saṅgama by present routes is about 40 miles. That the two children went alone to Kūḍala Saṅgama may not appear to be very plausible. It may be presumed that either Akkanāgamma might have been fairly aged when she left home, or her marriage alliance with Śivadēva of Kūḍala Saṅgama might have been attraction, though secondary, for them to go to Kūḍala Saṅgama, in which case they might have been accompanied naturally by some of their relatives also.

It was in Kūḍala Saṅgama that Basavēśvara's inner self reached realization fully. The reason why Basavēśvara left home was that he was already invested with Liṅga. Pālkurke Sōmanātha and Bhīmakavi state[47] that Saṅgamēśvara from Kūdala Saṅgama invested him with Liṅga at the time of his birth. Though Harihara does not say anything in this respect he seems to imply that in his early childhood Basavēśvara was brought up in an atmosphere of Śiva-bhakti.[48] According to Vīraśaivism, the Liṅga initiation is to take place twice, the first at the time of birth, or when the child is still enwombed and the second at the age of eight or so. The first initiation according to Pālkurke Sōmanātha[49] was performed by Saṅgamēśvara and the second, according to Harihara,[50] by Nandi at Kūḍala Saṅgama. But according to Siṅgirāja[51] it was done by Jātavēdamuni. The initiation of the pioneers of Vīraśaiva religion like Basavēśvara and Prabhudēva was done in an extraordinary way unlike the traditional system. How can we expect traditional procedure in respect of those who are out to establish new traditions? Biographers, therefore, relate that liṅga initiation of Basavēśvara was done by Saṅgamēśvara, Nandīśvara, Jātavēdamuni and so on.

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47 Basavapurāṇamu I. p. 15.
Basava Purāṇa II. 25-59.

48 He says that his parents were Śivabhakta and Śivabhakte, and he was brought up by his grand mother who was a ripe fruit of Śivabhakti—Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe II. p. 9.

49 Basavapurāṇamu: I. p. 25.

50 Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe: IV. p. 23-24.

51 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa V. 74.

At Kūḍala Saṅgama Basavēśvara used to get up early in the morning every day to collect sacred leaves and flowers unmoved by the wind and untouched by the bees for the worship of Saṅgamēśvara. He would be beside himself in the presence of Saṅgamēśvara. To be away from the worship of Saṅgamanātha even a moment was like an age to Basavēśvara[52]. The confluence of the sacred rivers Kṛṣṇā and Malaprabhā, the very source of vitality; the sorrounding nature, the source of beauty; the great saints at Saṅgama, the very incarnation of truth; and Saṅgamēśvara, the vital breath of devotion must have transformed the whole being of Basavēśvara.

Kūḍala Saṅgama was a noted centre of learning. Veda, Āgama, Kāvya, Purāṇa, Śāstra and other lores pertaining to *Bhakti* might have been studied there. One of the four inscriptions found at Kūḍala Saṅgama, dated 1160 A.D., describes Kūḍala Saṅgama as Kappad-Kūḍala Saṅgama, a reputed Brahmapuri, a centre of learned Brāhmins. The Mahājanas of Saṅgama were noted for their learning and scholarly pursuits. Īśānya Guru was said to be the Sthānapati, or the Chancellor of this centre of learning. It was this Iśānya Guru who might have initiated Basavēśvara in the study of this lore.

Basavēśvara must have studied the vedic lore only to be convinced that it could not lead him to eternal peace. The lore of the Śaiva Saints like Jēḍara Dāsimayya, Śaṅkara Dāsimayya, Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara, Sakalēśa Mādarasa and Koṇḍaguḷi Kēśirāja might have appealed to his mind very much. Also the 63 Purātanas *i.e.*, Nāyanārs of Tamiḷnāḍ seem to have impressed the mind of Basavēśvara considerably[53]. Such of the saints as were worshipping God, without any ostentation, submitting themselves to His will, could easily appeal to Śrī Basavēśvara because he was a kindred soul. The full personality of Basavēśvara thus bloomed at the feet of Saṅgamēśvara. It was here that he was convinced of the greatness of true devotion. The great devotees were his models. The great divine power was glowing in him. Being essentially one who was born to uplift the common man he could

52 Harihara: Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe: II. 11.

53 He refers to these purātanas in a number of Vacanas. In the Arjunawāḍa inscription Basavēśvara has been described as a devotee of the 63 purātanas.

never conceive the idea of great classics like those of Bāṇa, Mayūra and Halāyudha. Basavēśvara must have read, studied and meditated upon a number of literary and philosophical works. When he was convinced that they were meant only for a selected few, his heart would pour out in new vacanas. These vacanas with the divine touch of Saṅgamēśvara must have helped not only his mental growth but also of the people around. As a divine force Basavēśvara must have naturally impressed the great Gurus at Kūḍala Saṅgama who might have been planning for his future career.

Basavēśvara was born to link this world with the other in spirit.[54] At no stage in his life would he forget either. While the spiritual pursuits were going on at Kūḍala Saṅgama, the worldly activities also seem to have happened side by side there. Baladēva, his maternal uncle, was a minister at Kalyāṇa[55] (Maṅgaḷawāḍa). He had seen spiritual awakening in Basavēśvara and seemed to have approved of his discarding the thread ceremony[56] in favour of the Liṅga worship. As his sister's son and one who was akin in Liṅga worship, Baladēva might have been taking keen interest in the boy Basavēśvara. When he saw that Basavēśvara had developed into a great personality with the glow of the divine in him, he gave his daughter Gaṅgāṁbike in marriage to Basavēśvara. This marriage is said to have taken place at Kalyāṇa by Pālkurke Sōmanātha.[57] It is but natural that the marriage of the Minister's daughter should take place in the capital with all grandeur; but Basavēśvara must have been still in Kūḍala Saṅgama when this marriage took place, or returned to Kūḍala Saṅgama after the marriage ceremony was over. But his spiritual and religious activities continued to progress day by day.

As if to highten the spiritual power of Basavēśvara, another source of divine power was born to Nāgalāṁbe and Śivadēva at

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54 Śūnya Saṁpādane: p. 92. vacana 29.

55 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa. IV. 1.

56 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa III. 85-86 — He thinks of giving his daughter to Basavēśvara who had discarded the thread ceremony and not to any Bhavi.

57 Basava Purāṇamu: I. p. 20.
Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa IV.

Kūḍala Saṅgama. This was Cannabasavēśvara. Basavēśvara was holding his spiritual discourses with various Śaiva Saints who were flocking around him at Kūḍala Saṅgama. Great wisdom pervaded the atmosphere on account of the presence of these Śaraṇas. The child born in such an atmosphere, in such a holy place was, indeed, uncommon and extra ordinary. Basavēśvara had already attained such a stage, that whatever he would touch would become divine. The Liṅga initiation to the child Cannabasavēśvara was done, when he was eight months old in mother's womb by no less a saint than Basavēśvara himself.[58] The Prasāda at the Mahāmane (Great House) of Basavēśvara was all divine. It was no wonder that child Cannabasavēśvara was knowledge incarnate when still a young boy.[59] This was certainly due to the presence of Śivaśaraṇas. The birth of Cannabasavēśvara had been almost like the arrival of Saṅgamēśvara himself. Now he had enough strength to follow up his ideology. The eyes of the world were attracted to Basavēśvara, Nāgalāṁbe and Cannabasavēśvara at Kūḍala Saṅgama. The world was awaiting the break of a new dawn.

Having discarded the thread ceremony Basavēśvara, after a few months' stay in the Mahāmane of Iṅgaḷēśwara Bāgawāḍi, came to Kūḍala Saṅgama in 1140 A. D. The period of his stay at Kūḍala Saṅgama was extremely significant. It was in Kūḍala Saṅgama his troubled mind found peace. It was again in Kūḍala Saṅgama that his spiritual progress attained great height. His marriage with Gaṅgāṁbe took place and his devotion attracted many a saint; and discourses were held about their mystic experiences. The genesis of Anubhava Maṇṭapa could as well be seen in Kūḍala Saṅgama in its early origins. It was again in Kūḍala Saṅgama he might have started singing the vacanas pouring out his own spiritual ecstasies. The last, but not the least, was that Cannabasavēśvara was born in Kūḍala Saṅgama in 1143. A.D.[60]

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58 Cannabasavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu — No. 60.

59 Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada vacana: 517. The child born to day attained maturity to day itself.

60 Cannabasavēśvara is said to have lived for 24 years (P.G. Haḷakaṭṭi: Kālajñānada Vacana) and he was united with God in 1167. Hence this birth date.

All these events to happen would require about 10 to 12 years in the least. It could be surmised, therefore, that Basavēśvara might have stayed at Kūḍala Saṅgama till 1150 A.D. When Basavēśvara was deeply engrossed in his devotion nothing could swerve him from that. He was as it were in eternal bliss in the Presence, and with the Prasāda, of Saṅgamēśvara. What else could a devotee like Basavēśvara aspire for?

Suddenly there was a call for him to leave Kūḍala Saṅgama. He heard that divine call when he was asleep.[61] This was almost piercing through his heart. Saṅgamēśvara directed him to go to Maṅgaḷawāḍa where Bijjaḷa was ruling.[62] Basavēśvara could never agree to this. The morning dawned like the grace of God. He went to Saṅgamēśvara and fell down at his feet. He pleaded his unwillingness to leave Kappaḍi Saṅgama. On Saṅgamēśvar's assurance to accompany him wherever he went, Basavēśvara accepted the divine call. Who on earth can withstand the divine will?

The above is the account given in Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe of Harihara.[63] A great poet as he is, Harihara has depicted the incident in the most touching manner. The fact underlying this poetic narration is that there was then a divine call for Basavēśvara to leave Kūḍala Saṅgama for Maṅgaḷawāḍa. It is no wonder that a Bhaktibhaṇḍāri like Basavēśvara heard a divine call. Mystics are prone to have this kind of power. Such a phenomenon may not appeal to a rationalistic mind. The great gurus at Kūḍala Saṅgama were observing Basavēśvara right from his boyhood. Being convinced of the divine power they must have felt that it was time that Basavēśvara should launch himself into the larger world with his message of salvation to mankind. They were convinced that he had a definite mission to fulfil.

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61 Harihara: Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe IV p. 20-21.

62 Bijjaḷa was the Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara of Maṅgaḷwāḍa from about 1135 A.D. onwards— See Taṁbūr Inscription.

63 Sthala IV.

Accounts differ as to what place Basavēśvara left Kūḍala Saṅgama for. Harihara is the only one who makes mention of Maṅgaḷawāḍa in this connection. The rest are unanimous that Basavēśvara went to Kalyāṇa from Kūḍala Saṅgama.[64] Siṅgirāja identifies Maṅgaḷawāḍa with Kalyāṇa.[65] As Kalyāṇa was the place of most activities of Basavēśvara, many of the poets seem to agree about this place rightly. Harihara mentions Maṅgaḷawāḍa with all surety and gives the details how Basavēśvara rose there in his official position.[66] It is rather difficult to discount this: so rational is the course of events in their depiction. Basavēśvara had left Kūḍala Saṅgama around the year 1152 A.D. as seen above. Bijjaḷa was then ruling directly over Tardawāḍi at Maṅgaḷawāḍa. Basavēśvara might have first gone to Maṅgaḷawāḍa, as Harihara puts it, and stayed there for a couple of years and rose to prominence by dint of his own ability.

Basavēśvara first joins Bijjaḷa's office as a clerk. His sharp intellect very soon drew the attention of the higher officers like Soḍḍaḷa Bācarasa[67] and Bhaṇḍāri Siddharasa[68] at Maṅgaḷawāḍa. It is said[69] when the senior accountants committed a grave mistake in the accounts, Basavēśvara would point out the same to the great joy and surprise of Bhaṇḍāri Siddharasa who took him to Bijjaḷa and got him appointed as a clerk on a salary of 101 *honnes* per year. Very soon it was found that Basavēśvara and Siddharasa both belonged to Kammekula and were, therefore, related to one another.

Not long after Siddharasa's position as Bhaṇḍāri was also offered to Basavēśvara as Siddharasa died without an heir, and Basavēśvara was found to be the most appropriate choice.

Political situation at Kalyāṇa changed. Taila III who succeeded Jagadēkamalla in 1151 was rather a weak ruler. Bijjaḷa became the

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64 Palkurke Sōmanātha: Basavapurāṇamu II. Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa IV.
65 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa VII. 46.
66 Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe V. 140-200.
67 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa VI. 50-52.
68 Harihara: Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe V. 100-150.
69 Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe: V. 100-150.

Mahāpradhāna to Taila III in 1154 A.D. after displacing Bommarasa and Kasapayya in about a year or two. As he was a staunch Śaivite[70] his sympathies were always with Basavēśvara who was an ardent devotee of God Śiva. He had his full faith in him and was also impressed by his abilities and divine personality. So, as soon as he went to Kalyāṇa as Mahāpradhāna, he might have invited Basavēśvara as a Bhaṇḍāri.[71] After the death of Baladēva Basavēśvara became Minister[72] to Bijjaḷa in 1162 A.D. when the latter became the emperor. Basavēśvara's stay at Maṅgaḷawāḍa was short compared with that at Kūḍala Saṅgama or Kalyāṇa and, so, it has been over looked by biographers like Pālkurke Sōmanātha etc. Harihara however gives a graphic picture of Basavēśvara's stay at Maṅgaḷawāḍa with all the details. This appears to be a fact.

Political situation at Kalyāṇa was changing ever since Taila III became the Cālukyan Emperor. Bijjaḷa was manoeuvring things in such a way that no sudden change could take place in respect of the throne. He however created such a situation which conspired to make him indispensable if the Kingdom was not to be shattered to pieces. Such a situation of his own creation ultimately conspired to help him to take over the position of the King slowly. As already stated, Taila III who invaded Prōla did not return to Kalyāṇa. It would not be surprising if, even in this also, Bijjaḷa had his own hand. Having created the void by the absence of the King he assumed powers of the King though the king was only away from the capital as an exile. He however proved himself to be very able in managing the affairs of the Kingdom for over ten years; also as Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara and Mahāpradhāna he had won a number of battles. He had put down a number of enemies who rose against the empire. People were thus convinced of his power and ability to rule. It was natural during medieval days that powerful men

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70 That Bijjaḷa was a Śaivite could be seen in all his inscriptions. Later works like Cannabasava Purāṇa (1582) Bijjaḷarāya Carite wrongly depict him as a Jaina.

71 That Basavēśvara served under Bijjaḷa and was a Bhaṇḍāri is seen in some of the vacanas of Basavēsvara.

72 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa V. 9, 19, 65 and 66.

would usually be rulers. It appears that people did not suspect that Bijjaḷa would rise against the Cālukya emperor, who was near relative. Whatever changes might take place, the administration of the Empire nevertheless was to be carried out. Officials like Basavēśvara might have continued their work only in the interest, and, on behalf of the people and the country. When Bijjaḷa usurped the empire, in 1162 A.D. he himself might have felt that he had hurt the feelings of the people who were devoted to the Cālukya Kings. In such a situation he wanted a capable and divine person like Basavēśvara to be his minister in order to gain the confidence and good will of his subjects. It was in this way that Basavēśvara became the Minister to King Bijjaḷa in 1162.

Basavēśvara's life at Kalyāṇa since 1154 was most eventful. The dreams he dreamt at Kūḍala Saṅgama were being realised one by one at Kalyāṇa. He wanted to establish a new religion which would elevate the people to heavenly felicity here and in this world itself. He was almost successful in this by bringing about great reforms in the Śaiva religion. His Bhakti movement was unique in as much as it attracted great saints from all over India. He condemned all barriers of caste, creed, sex etc., and founded a society on the basis of equality and fraternity. Basavēśvara was a great success in establishing a new social and religious order, which the time spirit had led him to achieve at a propitious moment in the prevailing society.

The Śivānubhava Gōṣṭhis, or the spiritual discourses, that were being held in Kūḍala Saṅgama and Maṅgaḷawāḍa, took the shape of Śivānubhavamaṇṭapa, in his Mahāmane (Great House) at Kalyāṇa[73] Fundamental principles of religion, philosophy and society were discussed and the great Vacana literature took its final shape. Arrangements were made to spread the new thoughts in the contemporary society far and wide. The new awakening opened the eyes of the public in a short time. Basavēśvara was now not only a Minister but a central figure and a leader of a great

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73 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa: 48. 3-5.

socio-religious movement. As a devotee of high order, as a leader of great movement, Basavēśvara was in the heart of the people.

Basavēśvara had an enlightened family around him. There is no difference of opinion amongst the poets, who wrote his biography, about the fact that Basavēśvara had two wives. But as regards their names and parentage there is some confusion. Pālkurke Sōmanātha, Bhīmakavi and the rest who followed them state that Gaṅgāṁbike, the wife of Basavēśvara, was the daughter of Baladēva — his maternal uncle.[74] The other wife of Basavēśvara according to these poets was Māyidēvi.[75] Those poets who mention the name of Nīlalōcane as the second wife of Basavēśvara do not say whose daughter she was, and when the marriage took place. Siṅgirāja however relates an account in this respect.[76]

He describes Siddharasa as the father of Nīlalōcane. Harihara on the other hand mentions[77] Gaṅgādēvi and Māyidēvi as the two wives of Basavēśvara but does not mention the names of their fathers. It may be surmised, therfore, that Māyidevi was identical with Nīlalōcane, and Gaṅgādēvi and Nīlalōcane were the daughters of Baladēva and Siddharasa respectively. Basavēśvara had a son named Bālasaṅgayya. He is referred to as Cikkasaṅgayya in vacana literature. Harihara mentions Siddharasa as the son of Basavēśvara and that he was born to Gaṅgādevi. The whole family of Basavēśvara was breathing the spirit of religion. As mentioned before, his sister Nāgalāṁbike was seeker after a new path of salvation, his nephew

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74 Basava Purāṇa IV. 14-44.

75 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa X. 43.
Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe VI. line 6.

76 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa — VII.
Siṅgirāja states that Bijjaḷa's brother Karṇadēva was a child when his mother immolated herself in Sati after the death of Permāḍi, the father of Bijjaḷa and Karṇadēva. The motherless child Karṇadēva was brought up by Padmagandhi, the wife of Siddharasa. Thus Karṇadēva and Nīlalōcane were supposed to be brother and sister. Bijjaḷa taking Nīlalōcane as his own sister gives her in marriage to Basavēśvara in order to strengthen their relationship. This has been misconstrued by later Jain writers, that Bijjaḷa married Basavēśvara's sister and so on.

77 Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe VI. 6.

Cannabasavaṇṇa was knowledge incarnate, his wives Gaṅgāṁbike and Nīlāṁbe were the ardent followers of Basavēśvara in all his undertakings, his son Bālasaṅgayya was Saṅgamēśvar incarnate and himself a Bhaktibhāṇḍāri. Indeed it was an ideal family full of the divine spirit.

Basavēśvara's Mahāmane (Great House) was great in all respects. Having heard of the greatness of Basavēśvara, Śaraṇas from various parts of India were attracted to come to him.

Kalyāṇa was like heaven on earth. Basavēśvara had established the Śūnya Pīṭha of his Mahāmane,[78] in the Anubhavamaṇṭapa as a symbol of the new religion that was being advocated by the Śaraṇas in 1154 A.D. Allamaprabhu, a supreme Śivayōgi ascended this pīṭha in 1162 A.D. In fact Basavēśvara was waiting longingly for a number of years,[79] for the arrival of Prabhudēva who had visited with Siddharāmēśvara the Anubhavamaṇṭapa at Kalyāṇa when it was just started.[80] To add to the political eminence attained by Basavēśvara his spiritual glory also reached its zenith. If Basavēśvara was made the minister of the kingdom, Prabhudēva ascended the Śūnyapīṭha. At the same time innumerable saints assembled in Kalyāṇa. It was then that the secret of Iṣṭaliṅga and Śivayōga were preached by Prabhudēva to the Śaraṇas, gathering up the various paths into one faith. Basavēśvara's idea of establishing a new religion was thus realized by Prabhudēva, a Śivayōgi of unique achievement in spirituality. The Śaraṇas, who gathered in the Śivānubhava Maṇṭapa at the Mahāmane, or Great House, of Basavaṇṇa at Kalyāṇa, were following their own respective paths of Salvation though they were all Śivabhaktas. Prabhudēva could mould their devotion and transform it into Śivayōga. The real Bhakti itself was transformed as Mukti. The great organisation attracted saints

78 Siṅgirāja: Siṅgirāja Purāṇa 48. 3-4.

79 Basavēśvara Heccina Vacanagaḷu.

80 Śūnya Saṁpādane of Śivagaṇa Prasādi Mahādēvayya No. 21. Prabhuliṅgalīle XXII-3.

from such far off places like Kashmir,[81] Benaras,[82] etc.

One of the historical events at the Śivānubhava Maṇṭapa, at Kalyāṇa, was that of bringing Siddharāmēśvara into the fold of Śivayōga and Iṣṭaliṅga.[83] Prabhudēva as a true Jaṅgama moved from place to place meeting a number of mystics like Muktāyi, Goggayya, Gōrakṣa etc. His divine presence would transform them, and his discourses would bring them to his own religious fold of Iṣṭaliṅga and Śivayōga. In his great tour Prabhudēva met Siddharāmēśvara at Sonnalige, modern Sholapur, who was engaged in constructing tanks and wells.[84] He believed that social service would lead him to Mōkṣa. He was a yōgi by himself.[85] Prabhu could convince him of the futility of efforts he was making to achieve salvation and brought him to Kalyāṇa only to show him the greatness of Basavēśvara[86] who had achieved Mukti by his own Bhakti. Arrival of Siddharāmēśvara at Kalyāṇa was a great event, and his initiation of Iṣṭaliṅga by Cannabasavēśvara[87] was the greater event in the history of Vīraśaiva religion. Siddharāmēśvara himself was Jagadguru[88] having influence over the masses like that of Kings. A large number of inscriptions testify to this. They are found in distant places.[89] This Siddharāmēśvara appears to have been under the impact of the older form of Vīraśaivism advocated by Rēvaṇasiddha and others. It was Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara at whose blessings Siddha-

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81 Mōḷigeya Mārayya is said to have come from Kashmir after renouncing his Kingdom.
82 Śivaleṅka Mañcaṇṇa.
83 Śūnya Sampādane X; Prabhuliṅgalīle XIII.
84 Rāghavāṅka: Siddharāma Cāritra III.
85 Siddharāmēśvara Vacanagaḷu p. 14, 15.
86 Śūnya Sampādane III.
87 Śūnya Sampādane X.
88 Harihara: Havinahāḷa Kallayyana Ragaḷe.
Ekānta Rāmayyana Ragaḷe.
89 A. Bijapur District: Curigi, Saṅkha, Kudagi, Kapnimbargi, Gundkarjigi, Takal, Phadakerur, Jattigi, Eḍahaḷḷi, Caḍacān.
B. Sholapur Dist: Jambgaon, Akkalkot, Tadawal.
C. Usmānābād Dist: Nilegaon, Itkal.
D. Dharwar Dist: Buḍarsangi, Saugur, Koṭabāgi, Katanur, Mantrawāḍi.
E. Shimoga Dist: Sorab.
F. Chitradurga Dist: Chitradurg.

rāmēśvara was born to Suggale and Muddagowḍa at Sonnalige.[90] At Sonnalige (Sholapur) we find some reminiscences of Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara such as tank, Pādarakṣe etc.

It was Cannabasavēśvara who systematized the metaphysics of the Vīraśaiva system. The Ṣaṭsthala, which is the cardinal principle of Vīraśaiva philosophy, was organised and systematized at the great Mahāmane. Cannabasavēśvara was, therefore, called 'Ṣaṭsthala Cakravarti'[91] — the Sovereign of Ṣaṭsthala Philosophy.

The social revolution, however, is the hall-mark of this great movement. The cardinal principles for which Basavēśvara stood were of equality, liberty and fraternity. He would never accept any hierarchy in society. To him all were equal irrespective of caste, creed, occupation etc. His life-long struggle was to eradicate the deep rooted Varṇāśrama system. Basavēśvara being the Mahapradhāna would take his meals with Śivanāgamayya who formerly was an untouchable.[92] Such incidents must have created a sensation in the traditional society. The orthodox of the older traditions and other vicious people like Koṇḍeya Mañcaṇṇa[93] who were jealous of Basavēśvara's great achievements, carried tales to Bijjaḷa now and then to malign him.

They also accused Basavēśvara of misappropriation in the treasury[94] for maintaining the innumerable saints and followers at Kalyāṇa. These malicious tales might have created suspicion and fear in the mind of Bijjaḷa that the traditional society might rise against him if such things were proved true. To add fuel to the fire, a historical marriage ceremony took place at Kalyāṇa between the children of Madhuvarasa, who was formerly a Brāhmin, and Haraḷayya, an untouchable.[95] Both these were now Śaraṇas; and the

90 Rāghavāṅka: Siddharāma Cāritra I.
91 Siddharāmēśvara Vacanagaḷu p. 48.
Cannabasava Sāhitya — p. 244.
92 Harihara: Basavarāja Dēvara Ragaḷe.
93 Basavaṇṇanavara Heccina Vacanagaḷu p. 75, 122.
94 Basavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu 754.
95 Bhairavēśvara Kāvyada Kathāmaṇi Sūtra Ratnākara p. 230;
Śaraṇalīlāmṛta XXI

daughter of Madhuvarasa was given in marriage to the son of Haraḷayya. The Śivaśaraṇas had blessed the marriage. This was considered by traditional people as pratilōma marriage never permitted in the traditional society and which, therefore, infuriated them. Bijjaḷa could feel the pulse of resentment of the masses. At the pressure of such people Bijjaḷa had to punish severely the innocent Śaraṇas, Haraḷayya and Madhuvarasa. Their eyes were pulled out and they were dragged in the streets being tied to the feet of an elephant.[96]

This was an unbearable shock to the sensitive mind of Basavēśvara. Violence in any form was against his grain and principle.[97] He began to feel that his mission in Kalyāṇa came to an end. He took upon himself the blame that he could not convince the king and thus prevent this tragedy; and hence with great sorrow[98] in his heart he left Kalyāṇa for Kūḍala Saṅgama.[99] The violence he had witnessed there was more than what a sensitive mind could bear.

The Śaraṇas however were very much distressed. The people who were disgruntled[100] at the action of Bijjaḷa in usurping the Cālukyan throne seem now to have taken advantage of the situation to express their growing resentment. A chaotic condit'on began to prevail in Kalyāṇa in which Bijjaḷa was murdered by Jagadēva, Mallidēva and Bommaṇṇa.

The name Jagadēva Daṇṇāyaka is found in Maraḍīpur inscription. Also there is one Jagadēva in Śāntara dynasty who was attacked and crushed by Bijjaḷa's generals.[101] It is possible that one of these two might have murdered Bijjaḷa for some political reasons.

In the inscription of Koñjāpūr, one Mallidēva of Guttarasa dynasty has been described as 'Bijjiga Śiracchēdaka' — one who

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96 Bhīmakavi: Basava Purāṇa: 60.4; Cannabasava Purāṇa V. 9-20. Śūnya Saṁpādane (Gūḷūr) XXI.18. Raghavāṅka Cāritra XV. 17; Vṛṣabhēndra Vijayaṁ 42.3.

97 Basavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu No. 247.

98 Basavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu No. 626.

99 Turugāhi Rāmaṇṇana Vacanagaḷu No. 45; Śūnya Saṁpādane (Gūḷūr) XXI - 78.

100 Pāṇḍyas of Ucchaṅgi, Guttarasas of Gutti, Kadaṁbas of Goa, Cōḷas of Niḍugal never recognised Bijjaḷa as the emperor and stood firm to the last.

101 Sāgar inscription 114 of 1166 A.D.

cut off the head of Bijjīga. We have seen the Guttarasas of Gutti were loyal to the Cālukyas to the core and it is not unlikely that this Mallidēva had a part in the murder. The date of the inscription also coincides.

As regards Bommaṇṇa, one Kumāra Bommayya of Toragal dynasty, the commander-in-chief of Sōmēśvara III has been referred to as Cālukya Rājya Pratisṭhāpaka — the one who established the Cālukyan rule. It has been seen that Taila III had lost the empire, and his son Sōmēśvara III naturally must be trying to regain the empire. Men like Bommayya who were loyal might have helped and deserved the title. It may, therefore, be inferred that this Bommayya might have also had an important hand in the murder.

Unfortunately the royal family suspected the Śaraṇas for this crime and they were chased by Rāyamurāri Sōvidēva, the son of King Bijjaḷa. The Śaraṇas' chapter in the annals of Kalyāṇa thus came to a sad end.

Basavēśvara, who had left Kalyāṇa three months before[102] the tragic incident, attained union with Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvara in 1167 A.D.[103]

R. C. HIREMATH

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102 Kālajñānada Vacana. p. 44.
Ed. by Dr. P. G. Haḷakaṭṭi, Bijapur, 1934.

103 All these events have taken place towards the close of 1167 A.D. From 1168 A.D. onwards Rāya Murāri Sōvidēva has been described as the emperor in the inscriptions.

SECTION : TWO

Melt my mind and purge its stains,
Test it and in fire refine!
Hammer, so the hammer pains,
To pure gold this heart of mine!
Beat from me, great Craftsman, beat
Anklets for Thy devotees' feet:
*Save me, Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama!**

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA : A MYSTIC

I

The beginnings of Indian mysticism may be traced to the Vedas. In these religious texts we find a number of hymns addressed to the Gods by the Vedic Seers (Ṛṣis). From the hymns we learn that the sages experienced blissful visions of their favourite deities by intuition and not by either perception or by inference. We also learn that by meditation the seers felt absorbed in the divine essence. In such a state they experienced not only complete identity with the deities but also enjoyed supreme ecstasy.

The essence of mysticism, namely, the intuitive apprehension of the Supreme and the consequent experience of ecstasy formed the subject matter of the *Upaniṣads* also. In these great philosophic texts it was pointed out that the Self and the Supreme were non-dual and that it should be man's earnest endeavour to experience this spiritual state. Such an idea is clear from the brief but effective statements like, "This Brahman is the Self."[1] "That thou art,"[2] "I am Brahman"[3] and "Brahman is consciousness."[4] The nature of mystic experience is beautifully portrayed in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* which says: "His form is not to be seen; No one sees Him

1 "Ayaṁ ātmā Brahma" (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*) II. 5.19.
2 "Tat Tvaṁ asi" (*Cāndogya Upaniṣad*) VI. 8.7.
3 "Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi" (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*) I. IV. 10.
4 "Prajñānam Brahma" (*Aitareya Upaniṣad*) III.1.3.

by the eye. Those who know him by mind as dwelling in the heart become immortal."[5]

The theme of mysticism was continued in the *Bhagavadgītā*. Indeed some thinkers are of the opinion that the "Gītā is a gospel of mysticism". Attempting a description of an ideal mystic, the Gītā says: "Whenever a man sees the existence of different beings as rooted in the Supreme God and thinks that all beings are projections from Him, that moment he attains the Supreme".[6] It further points out that to have a vision of the Lord, a third or the mystic eye is absolutely necessary. Lord Kṛṣṇa blessed Arjuna with such an eye before He revealed His universal form to him.[7] And it is the Gītā that makes the important point that *Bhakti*, or devotion, is the primary means to the attainment of mystic experience.[8]

It is interesting to note that in many schools (Darśanas) of Indian philosophy logical recognition is given to the mystic. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika in particular speaks of the super normal perception of the yogins or mystics.[9] This system not only mentions 'transcendental experience' but also says that it is of two kinds: of those who have attained concentration and of those who are striving for it.[10] It establishes that a yogin "who has attained concentration *always* has knowledge of everything while the yogin of the second type *is aided* by meditation".[11] Many systems, too, believe in the exceptional capacity of mystics and point out that they perceive things which

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5 'Na samdṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpamasya
na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam;
Hṛdāhṛdisthaṁ manasā ya enam,
Evaṁ viduramṛtāste bhavanti'. IV - 20.

6 "Yadā bhūtapṛthagbhāvam
Ekasthamanupasyati
Tata eva ca vistāram
Brahma sampadyate tadā XIII - 20.

7 Divyam dadāmi te cakṣuḥ
pasya me yogamaisvaram. XI - 8.

8 "Bhaktāḥ te'tīva me priyāḥ" XII - 30.

9. Bhāṣāpariccheda Kārikā 63.

10 Ibid - 65.

11 Ibid - 66.

ordinary people cannot. Such *yogins* have a state of ecstasy; and during this state they have knowledge of things, however subtle or remote they may be, solely through their own mental power.

II

There were a number of great mystics in India from early times. Some of the important ones among these were: Goswāmi Tulsi Dās, Bhakta Mīrā, Saint Pattināthar, Saint Purandaradāsa, Guru Nānak, Saint Tukārām, Saint Tyāgarāja and Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa. And to this list of great Indian mystics should be added the name of Śrī Basava, or Basavēśvara, who lived in the Karnāṭaka country in the 12th century A. D. He was a great religious reformer and was responsible for the development of the Vīraśaiva faith which believes in the worship of the omnipotent Śiva as the only God. He possessed great spiritual powers gained from the practice of mysticism. This is clear from the many deeds of wonder which are attributed to him. We learn that the River Kṛṣṇa once made way for him when he wanted to cross it. On another occasion, he showed King Bijjaḷa the exact place where a valuable treasure was hidden. When a devotee of Śiva called Śivaleṅkamañcarasa approached Basava with a request for pearls, the latter gave him a measure of corn which later turned into brilliant gems. On a different occasion and to the great amazement of people around him, Basavēśvara seems to have commanded even the Sun God to stop from moving for a period of eleven days! Many other extraordinary acts attributed to Basavēśvara clearly indicate that he was gifted with supernatural powers commonly associated with mystics.

The reasons why Basavēśvara chose the path of mysticism were unique. He found religious minded men of his times advocating dogma, tradition and scriptural study for the realisation of God. When he appeared on the religious scene, he found in the Karnāṭaka country both Buddhism and Jainism in a weakened state. The cult of sacrifice was widely practised and society was hopelessly divided into castes and communities. The path of knowledge and

the 'path of action' taught by the early Indian scriptures for winning the grace of God were difficult ones for the ordinary man to tread. Basavēśvara was therefore dissatisfied with the ways advocated by the different religions of his times for the realisation of God. To him, the proper method of attaining divine knowledge was to cultivate that condition of mind in which the unity of soul and God was immediately felt. He therefore rebelled against the traditional modes of religious practices and tried his best to organise a religious society which could experience the pleasures of divine bliss unhindered by other useless considerations. In short he came to the conclusion that the practice of intense devotion to Śiva, the Supreme God, was the surest and indeed the only way of establishing unity with that Godhead. Basavēśvara enkindled and deepened Hinduism on its religious side and made the path of devotion highly popular. He gave a worthy expression to the emotional factor in religion. He threw wide open the gateway of devotion and invited all to enter the palace of divinity. He was not only an unequalled devotee of Śiva but also a staunch advocate of the path of devotion. He was impatient with those who argued for the performance of religious rites to realise God. "How can devotion to Śiva and adherence to rites agree?" — he exclaimed often; and he discarded the 'sacred thread' which was the symbol of one who was devoted to the observance of rituals.[12] He forcefully maintained that 'Śiva could be won over only by devotion and not either by music or by vedic chants'.[13] He described very vividly the signs of ecstasy that can be noticed in a devotee while experiencing a mystic vision of God: "His (the devotee's) mind melts, he experiences thrills of rapture, his eyes shed tears of joy and his speech becomes choked with feelings

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12 "Śivabhaktiyuṁ karmamuṁ endumondāgirdu endollade parama vairāgya yuktaṁ Śiva-liṅgārcanāyatta cittaṁ karmalateyantirda jannivāramaṁ kaḷedu bisuṭu......"

M. R. Srinivasamurthy: "*Bhakti Bhāṇḍāri Basavaṇṇanavaru*" — p. 33.

13 Nādapriyanū alla. Vēdapriyanū alla.
Bhaktipriya namma Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva. Ibid. 35.

of pleasure."[14] And Basavēśvara longed to experience such signs of devotion in his person.

Practice of intense devotion led Basaveśvara to experience the mystic joy of seeing the vision of Lord Śiva and of feeling one with Him. He dreaded the moment when he thought that Śiva's vision was disappearing from his mind. "Do not run away", he exclaimed once, addressing the deity of his choice, "I dislike asking for favours. Only I beg to have a full view of Thee, Oh! Lord, and experience the joy resulting therefrom. Why can't you speak to me, my Lord; after all I am your devout servant."[15] When he stayed in the holy place called Saṅgamakṣētra, Śrī Basava was not disturbed either by his family or by his political activities or by opponents belonging to other faiths. And during his stay in this holy place, he experienced very often feelings of joy which were the result of his mystic communion with Śiva, the Supreme God. In such ecstatic moments Basava repeatedly begged Śiva to bless him with Grace.[16] He shed tears of joy, he was overcome by feelings of spiritual bliss and he engaged himself continuously in the worship of his chosen deity.[17]

The gift of experiencing such mystic delight could come only to a person who led a moral life. Basava in his sweet and profound sayings emphasised this point and called upon all the people belonging to the Vīraśaiva faith to become morally pure. He tried to set an

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14 "manamanaberasidalli tanukaragadiddaḍe,
sōṅkinalli puḷakaṅgaḷu horahommadiddaḍe,
kaṇḍāgaḷaśrujalaṅgaḷu suriyadiddaḍe,
nuḍivalligadgadaṅgaḷu poṇmadiddaḍe,
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvara bhaktigidu cihna,
ennallivillavāgi ānu ḍambhaka kāṇire".
Ibid. 44.

15 'ōḍadiru ōḍadiru, ninna bēḍuvavanānalla. Śivane nōḍuve kaṇṇatuṁba. āḍipāḍi nalidāḍuve, bēḍe. ennakūḍa mātāḍalāgade. ele Śivane Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva nīnāḍisuva boṁbe nānu.'
Ibid. P. 17.

16 'ayyā nī māḍalāda jagattu. ayyā nī māḍalāda saṁsāra. ...ayyā nī biḍisidare biṭṭittu. tāmasavayyā! nānī māyeyageddeneṁba hammidēke Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva'. Ibid. 41.

17 'enna kaṇṇoḷage paridāḍu Kūḍalasaṅga,
enna manadoḷage kuṇidāḍu Kūḍalasaṅga'. Ibid. P. 38.

example for others by his own conduct and sincerely prayed to God 'not to make him at any time a man of bad conduct or of wicked thoughts'.[18] His sole aim was to be a person of virtue keen on serving God (Liṅga) and His devotees (Jaṅgamas). He did not sympathise much with the view that a person was destined to reap the rewards of his past deeds and that one was good or bad in accordance with actions done in previous lives.[19]

The mystic way of life also depended on the control of the mind (Manojaya) and Basava was not less insistent on the practice of this essential quality. Objects of the senses generally weaned away a person from his noble pursuits and broke a man's powers of concentration on God. In one of his moments of deep devotion Basavēśvara begs of God to equip him with the ability to discard all objects of pleasure and requests Him mercifully to remove them from his sight. "After all" said Basava, "like an animal, man falls a prey to the 'grass of sense-objects' spread before him. God, therefore, in his infinite Grace has to help by removing all objects of pleasure from him, by feeding him with the 'juice of devotion' and by strengthening him with the 'waters of wisdom'."[20]

And in such a person whose moral stature is high and whose powers of control are exemplary, faith in God which is absolutely necessary for leading a mystic way of life grows in strength. Basava earnestly pleads for the cultivation of unbounded and firm faith in God (Liṅga) and his devotees (Jaṅgamas). He passionately yearned for the development of such faith in himself and advised all his disciples to follow him in this regard.[21] He warned his followers that even

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18 'durvyasani, durācāri endenisadirayyā! enna liṅgavyasani, jaṅgamaprēmi endenisayya.' Ibid. p. 33.

19 'avaśyamanubhoktavyam' endenisadirayya!
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva seragoḍḍi bēḍuvenu' — Ibid. p. 33.

20 'Viṣayavemba hasuranenna munde tandu pasarisadirayya. Paśuvēnaballudu hasurendeḷasuvadallade? Viṣayarahitana māḍi bhaktirasava daṇiya mēyisi subuddhi emba udakavaneredu nōḍi salahayya Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva'. Ibid. p. 40.

21 "Liṅgava nambu kaṇḍyā manave. jaṅgamava
nambu kaṇḍyā manave. Kūḍala Saṅgama
dēvara biḍade bembattu, kaṇḍyā manave". Ibid - p. 37.

a momentary feeling of doubt or indifference entertained towards God and his devotees would lead to dire calamity.[22] Indeed, this essential trait of a mystic was predominant in the life and activities of Basavēśvara even from his childhood. For we learn that when he was yet a boy and was falsely accused of pushing a friend into the waters of a river close by, Basava sought shelter under the roof of a temple of Śiva, embraced firmly the idol of the deity in it and did not move out until he was cleared of the charge. And we learn that Lord Śiva stood by his sincere devotee in this hour of trial and made His omniscience felt both by Basava and the people who surrounded him.

High moral sense and unshakable belief in the Almighty led Basavēśvara to abandon his ego and to surrender himself entirely to the will of God. It was firmly his conviction that the slightest sense of agency (kartṛtva) was enough to pull a devotee away from God. He gave expression to this important truth in his saying: "I said that my body was at the service of my Teacher (Guru) and I strayed away from him; I said that my mind was made over to the Lord and I lost Him; I said that my wealth was at the disposal of devotees (jaṅgamas) and I missed their company........... Oh! Lord of Kūḍala Saṅgama, nothing is so baneful as to say that I did something for you".[23] Basava therefore was careful and took all possible steps to eschew the sense of agency in all that he did. This helped him completely to surrender himself to Lord Śiva and to bring him to a position near enough to enjoy complete identity with the object of his worship. Addressing the Lord of Kūḍala Saṅgama, he exclaimed: "Lord, Thou art my father, thou my mother; thou art my near

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22 "anantakōṭi sanmānava māḍidaḍēnu?
nimiṣada udāsīna keḍisittu.
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva, nimmanaṁbiyū
naṁbada ḍaṁbhaka nānayya". Ibid. p. 47.

23 "tanuvakoṭṭenendu nuḍidu guruvacanakke
dūravāde. manava koṭṭenendu nuḍidu
liṅgamukhakke dūravāde, dhanava
koṭṭenendu nuḍidu jaṅgamamukhakke
dūravāde. Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvayya
nimage māḍidenendu nuḍidu keṭṭa
kēḍiṅge kaḍe illa". Ibid. p. 55.

and dear relation, and there is none to protect me other than Thee".[24] Thereafter he delighted in the worship of Śiva; he offered his Lord the best of scents and the most beautiful of flowers.[25] This kind of sincere worship in its turn helped him deeply to concentrate on God. Basava always wanted to be near his God Śiva and near His devotees. He always desired to be thinking of Him: "O Father", he exclaims, "make me a cripple so that I do not move away from you, a blind man so that I do not see others around, a deaf one so that I do not hear of anything other than yourself. And make me think of nothing else other than the holy feet of your devotees."[26]

Deep devotion to God, cultivation of ethical virtues, control of the mind, service of the Supreme, contemplation and faith, these made Basavēśvara think that there was absolutely no difference between him and other *Śaraṇas*, or devotees of Śiva. He experienced in the true mystic style complete identity between himself and these *Jaṅgamas*, God's great representatives on earth. Nor did he see any difference between them and the Supreme Śiva (Liṅga). It is for this reason that we find Basava often proclaiming: "Come what may, I shall ever worship Śiva (Liṅga), I shall ever revere His devotees (jaṅgamas) and I shall never miss their Grace".[27] Basava also taught that it was only God's devotees (Śaraṇas) who can really lead

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24 "tande nīnu, tāyi nīnu, bandhu nīnu,
baḷaga nīnu, enage nīnallade mattārū
illavayya. Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva,
hālaladdu, nīraladdu." Ibid. p. 56.

25 "candracūḍaṅge sirigandhamanalaṅkarisi,
sāndrasaurabhyamaya puṣpadiṁ siṅgarisi......" Ibid. p. 38.

26 "Attalitta hōgadante heḷavana māḍayya
tande! sutti suḷidu nōḍadante andhakana
māḍayya tande! mattonda kēḷadante
kivuḍana māḍayya tande! niṁma śaraṇara-
pādavallade anyaviṣayakkeḷasadante
irisu Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva".
Bhakti Bhāṇḍāri Basavaṇṇanavaru — p. 39.

27 "hiḍikhaṇḍava koyyali, ikkuvaśūla
prāptisali, hākondeśe hannondeseyāgi
māḍutirali, matteyū liṅgārādhane māḍuve,
jaṅgamārādhane māḍuve, prasādakke tappe.
intappa bhāṣe kiñcittu husiyādare
nīnande mūga koyyi Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva". Ibid - p. 15.

men towards Realisation of the Supreme and called upon all of the Vīraśaiva faith to pay the highest regard to Śaraṇas and Jaṅgamas.[28]

The non-duality which Basavēśvara experienced between himself and the Jaṅgamas was perhaps the first kind of mystic experience that he had. This step led him gradually to the final mystic phase of experiencing non-duality or identification between himself and the Supreme Śiva. He saw it in a flash that he and the Supreme (Liṅga) were one and identical in essence. After this supreme experience of oneness, Basava set aside all thoughts of duality which he had felt earlier in the worship of Śiva. Indeed he had thought of himself at first as a servant of God and as a dear sweetheart of the great Lord. And now with the dawn of the great truth that the Supreme and himself were one, he cast away all sense of difference and experienced the ecstatic pleasures of non-duality. In a moment of supreme delight, he describes this state of non-duality thus: "What is the use of worshipping the Lord if a devotee does not realise that they are of the same pleasure, of the same essence and of similar happiness? And of what use is it to worship the Lord if he does not feel that he is like water flowing into and mixing with the waters of a river?"[29] At such moments too Basavēśvara was not conscious 'of the ten directions, of the earth and of the heavens above'. Nor was he conscious then that the 'entire universe was situated in the Supreme' — for the universe and the Supreme were identical. Indeed he felt then that he was like a hailstone that had fallen into the vast waters of the ocean. He was conscious of nothing except the presence of

28 "Vāridhi maidegedare ratnaṅgaḷa
kāṇabahudu. Kūḍala Saṅgana śaraṇaru
manaderedu mātanāḍidare liṅgava
kāṇabahudu." Ibid - p. 105.

29 "Liṅgava pūjisi phalavēnayya, samarati
samakaḷe, samasukhavanariyadannakka?
Liṅgavapūjisi phalavēnayya? Kūḍala-
Saṅgamadēvara pūjisi nadiyoḷage
nadiberesidantāgadannakka".

Ibid. - p. 57.

Śiva everywhere.[30] He had only the absorbing mystic experience of merging into the Great 'omnipresent mass' and of being one with the 'omniscient light' — the indivisible Supreme.[31]

Such was the nature of the supreme mystic ecstasy that Basavēśvara, the ardent devotee of Śiva, experienced in his moments of deep contemplation. And it goes very much to the credit of this great and godly man, religious and social reformer, that at moments when he was not in deep contemplation, he had the compassion and goodness to share with his fellowmen his mystic and ecstatic experiences. After the manner of a *Sthitaprajña*, or one of steadfast mind, his attention was always fixed on God though he was engaged in the affairs of the world. Men of Śrī Basavēśvara's stature truly set a model for other human beings; and by following the footsteps of such religious masters, devoted men of God are bound to realise the delights of spiritual experience.

JAYACHAMARAJA WADIYAR

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30 "daśadikku dhare gaganavembuda
nānariyenayya!! 'liṅgamadhye jagatsarvam'
embudanariyenayya! liṅgasōṅkina
sukhadoḷage Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvayya,
ambudhiyoḷage bidda vārikallinante
bhinnabhāvavanariyade 'Siva Śivā'
ennutidde nānu". Ibid - p. 57.

31 'ghanagambhīra mahāghanadoḷage ghanakke
ghanavāgiddenayya! Kūḍala Saṅgayyanemba
mahābeḷagina beḷaginoḷagirdenemba
śabdamugdhavādudanēnembenayya'. Ibid. p. 57.

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA: THE UNIVERSAL MAN

There was a time when the phrase 'a citizen of the world' hit the highest water-mark of culture. The Space Age is in love with the phrase 'Universal Man'. But *Viśvamānava*, its Sanskrit equivalent, is as old as the Vedas! All knowledge is in a sense, as Keats said, a remembrance.

What is our notion of Universal Man? Apparently, he is a person whose heart is as large as the universe, whose mind is so vast that he can take in the whole of creation at a glance, the rhythm of whose daily life is in tune with the Infinite in every vibration and whose body is at home in all climates and under every sky. He has a comprehensive soul.

Comprehensiveness of soul is, in a sense, inclusive of other things: for it establishes the most intimate identity with all human beings, beasts, birds, trees, rocks and stones. The universal man is he who is one with the universe.

It is the pride of Karnāṭak that she produced early in the twelfth century a universal man whose vision was unclouded and who sought to realise in the life of the individual as well as the collectivity this supreme universality of vision. If Allama Prabhu was the God-Man of his time Basavēśvara was the Universal Man. Their companionship and collaboration was as significant as that of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. There was a period of glory when this great conjunction shone dazzlingly in the sky and illumined life all over the Kannaḍa land and beyond.

Basavēśvara perceived clearly the futility of all creeds and the worship of demons and demonesses that dominated the folk imagination. He was a relentless rationalist in his attack on ignorance and superstition. He was more intensely modern than many modern thinkers in his insistence on rationality as a valuable aid to the spiritual life. It was a surprisingly clear vision he had, if we consider what was happening all over the world in the twelfth century. The founder of every philosophy or religion has to accept a terminology and a tradition and Basavēśvara accepted the Śaiva tradition with certain modifications. One has to take one's stand on a point in space in order to gaze at the sky. But what matters is the gaze.

If his was an intellect keen as the razor's edge, his heart's bounty was as deep as the ocean. The robbers who came to rob him were overcome by his magnanimity and fell at his feet as disciples. For he sent after them the calves of the cows they had stolen. When a house-breaker attempted to take away by force the earring of his wife, Basavēśvara exclaimed: "A thief that I am, a super-thief has broken into my house. He can't be other than God Himself." He worshipped every devotee as God in human form and gave what all the devotee desired. He cried in his heart's anguish that he might see the Face Divine. His *bhakti* or devotion was unparalleled. He served king Bijjaḷa loyally as his finance minister. But the infinite wealth of his heart's devotion was consecrated to Saṅgama Dēva, to God alone.

Basavēśvara lived his life divinely, fearing none and hating none. To a society petrified into castes and creeds, he came as the great deliverer, preaching oneness and equality, equating the pariah with the brahmin and the bearer with the prince. All were equals in the eyes of God and comparative greatness was one of proximity to God. Greatness did not depend on the accident of birth or caste. He thought of human society as a democracy of souls with inherent respect and affection for all. His introspection was a solar gaze beneath which all flaws and follies withered away. The inner man in him and the outer were one and the same. It is only the integrated man — with his heart, mind and will pointing to the same star — that can be universal Man.

Truth to tell, Universal Man is the harbinger of a new race, the prophet of a new humanity. Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha, Mahāvīra and the Buddha, the Christ and Zoroaster: it is as a star in this galaxy that Basava beckons to us from the twelfth century. He might as well be a prophet of our own times, such is the modernity of his teaching. His teachings will find a sympathetic echo in a Russian or American, a Mexican or Egyptian bosom: such is the universality of his teaching. Universalism is struggling to send its roots down the earth and assert the unity of humanity. Humanity, alas, monkeys about among the branches and forgets the roots. This has been its story through the ages. But that great day may yet dawn for humanity. It is for this dawn that Universal Man has lived and died and his life and death have not been in vain.

There has hardly been a more glorious academy of souls than the Academy of Experience that Basavēśvara established in Kalyāṇa. Here under the guidance of Allama Prabhu and spear-headed by Basavēśvara met seers and saints to weigh themselves and weigh each other; to cross-examine each other so that no dishonesty ever lurked in the discovery of the Liṅga, the 'one entire and perfect chrysolite'; to kindle each other's consciousness into a divine blaze; to companion each other as pilgrims of eternity; to safeguard the pearl of purity that was as precious as their tribe; and to pass on as a legacy to humanity their path-finding and soul-finding, their God-intoxication and dedication and their gospel of a new social order, of a redeemed and emancipated humanity. If Christ was the white Lamb, Basavēśvara was the Saviour Bull, the Nandi that descended to earth with Śiva and Pārvati on his back. No wonder, the seekers of spirit felt that Kalyāṇa was Kailāsa itself, the New Jerusalem with its streets paven with gold.

Universal Man that he was, Basavēśvara cultivated and enriched a literary form that had a universality of appeal — the *vacana* or brief prose lyric. It was couched in the colloquial idiom of the time acceptable to the written standard of the day. Its rhythm was linear and non-metrical but intense, distinguished by varying repetition, balance and antithesis. Basavēśvara gave this form the

poignancy of heart-rending devotion, the luminousness of rare mystical experience and the perspicacity of intense metaphysical brooding. It raised the banner of revolt in literature against conventional poetry and there arose a great band of *vacanakāras* who made this form their own. These lyric utterances were simple enough to be understood by most and yet great enough to be admired by the most sophisticated. This was so because, first and foremost, the *vacana* was an authentic utterance summing up a mystical insight, an apocalyptic moment or contemplative delight. It gave the primacy to experience.

It was a great moment in the life of Karnāṭak when a social upheaval seemed imminent. The men of vision were there to lead a social revolution. Allama Prabhu, Basavēśvara, Cennabasavēśvara, Mahādēvi Akka, — to name only four of the most outstanding — had the capacity to lead any new movement to a triumphant close. But the hour was not ripe for it. A casteless society seemed almost a fantasy at the time. The brahmin and jain orthodoxy raised the familiar hue and cry that religion was in danger. The king sat on the fence, looking this way and that. The imputation too was made that the finance minister was abusing his position and using the revenue of the State to promote this heresy. The king knew that this was baseless propaganda and Basavēśvara was vindicated publicly. But matters came to a head through the zeal of followers like Maḍivāḷa. Mācayya. The daughter of Madhuvarasa, a brahmin, was given in marriage to the son of Haraḷayya, an 'untouchable', and the marriage was celebrated by Basavēśvara's followers. Both Madhuvarasa and Haraḷayya had been Basavēśvara's disciples. The orthodoxy in Kalyāṇa complained against this to the king and insisted that offenders should be brought to book. But Basavēśvara, being a free thinker advised Bijjaḷa against the alleging orthodoxy and justified the marriage. Finding Bijjaḷa giving a deaf ear to his advice, Basavēśvara left Kalyāṇa for Kappaḍi Saṅgama near Bāgalkōt.

The Universal Man had absorbed the universe within himself, formulated a creed leading to a casteless society and attracted to

himself seers and men of vision who realised its tremendous social significance. But there was fanaticism on either side and the hour was not yet. And so he returned to the confluence from which he came, his fulfilling itself, though the quest had to go on.

But fortunately for Karnāṭak and for the world, Basavēśvara left behind him a veritable treasure of poignant prose lyrics and these have kept the vision of Universal Man alive through the centuries and will continue to do so till the dream is realised.

"Be not light-hearted with the saints", said Basavēśvara: "Would you take hold of serpent-hoods to tickle your cheek? Would you extricate the tangled knot of head-hair with a flaming torch? Would you go swinging, clinging to the whiskers of a tiger?"

"Why are you bent on correcting the world," he asked: "Correct yourself. Attend to your own body. Attend to your mind."

His last prayer was: "I did your bidding. Take me into your bosom now, O Kūḍala Saṅgama!" And that is the prayer of the great of all times, who descended into the flesh.

VINAYAK KRISHNA GOKAK

The lotus lends the water grace,
And billows to the sea;
A woman's virtue is her grace,
The sky's the moon:
The ashmark on the brow
Lends grace to a Śaraṇa
*Of our Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.**

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA : A PROPHET

Basava was a great prophet and his greatness lay in his ability to live as a prophet and die as a prophet. Real greatness belongs to different types — the manifestation of the heroic in man in different forms is to be found in a small number of men. Greatness is thus found on a graduated scale and higher the form of greatness, slower is the recognition that comes to it. Men to whom the distinction of greatness is given as a title are sometimes no benefactors of humanity. What does the world owe to Alexander the Great and Napoleon Bonaparte? They sacrificed thousands of human lives to their own ambition of conquest, and brought sorrow and lamentation to thousands of peaceful homes. They have left no enduring monument of good work nor anything to promote the happiness of the peoples over whom they ruled. Other men who are now recognised as great received no appreciation nor reward in their life-time. Homer was no more than a wandering singer who probably lived on the charity of other people. Shakespeare was an obscure play-actor who frequented the antirooms of titled patricians. These are now remembered with gratitude and Shakespeare's birth place has now become a place of pilgrimage. The greatest men are prophets and sages who, sometimes, were rewarded with punishment and death.

Basava appeared at a time when the Hindu society was at the lowest ebb. The religious and social institutions were defunct. He strove to regenerate the institutions with a missionary zeal and succeeded to a very considerable extent in his strife. But all was not

smooth, he was met with opposition by the orthodox people of vested interests. All human institutions have a tendency to move along a fixed groove and any innovation is looked upon with suspicion and alarm. A new doctrine or a new truth is always regarded as a menace to the existing order of things. Great men do not keep pace with the ordinary run of mankind. They do not accept with credulity the beliefs or customs that have been followed for many generations. They find a society comfortably ensconced behind old beliefs and old institutions hardened with times, but they try to question their validity by their "new fangled doctrines" or the new truths they claim to have found. Every form of authority, whether it be a hierarchy, an oligarchy or the rule of one man, insists on submissiveness for the smooth working of its regime. It will not tolerate any challenge to its sovereignty nor brook any hesitation in obeying its law. The world is accustomed to mediocres and men who do not deviate from the beaten path. History is full of instances of the persecution of great men innocent of any real offence, but supposed to have offended against some prevailing belief or some law in operation at the time. Socrates was put to death by the Greeks in Athens; Jesus Christ was crucified in Jerusalem by the Jews and Romans; Latimer was burnt at the stake in England by the Christians; Gandhiji was murdered by a Hindu and Kennedy was shot by an assassin. Instead of being a shield and buckler, greatness is frequently a challenge to the law which is another name for physical force. It is only after the lapse of some time that a man condemned by the law is called a martyr, when posterity discovers his greatness.

Basava, one of India's outstanding religious teachers, was also a statesman and a man of letters. His vacanas, or sayings, started a new genre unique in Kannaḍa literature. Basava was principally a reformer but his reform through vacanas was imbued by bold philosophy as well as beautiful poetry. Philosophy need not be the cold speculation of logic. There was a time when philosophy was the handmaid of logical intellect. Today stale intellect has made room for fresh intuition. The watchword of philosophy is no longer more logic but more life. Once philosophy begins to deal with life,

the barrier between poetry and philosophy becomes thin. If the aim of poetry is the worship of beauty, the aim of philosophy is the worship of truth, hence the two are not opposed, for truth is beauty and beauty truth. In the sayings of Basava we find a harmony of poetry and philosophy, of truth and beauty. Basava often enjoys the mystic moods and rises to poetic rapture and bursts into inspired sayings. Most of his lyrical sayings are born under mystic exaltations. In the mystic mood he feels the presence of Reality and is seized with real joy. Art springs from real joy and his lyrical joy and his lyrical sayings bear the stamp of poetry. "The nearest approximations to the sayings of Basava would be the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius, Thomas a Kempis' 'Imitation of Christ' and Tagore's 'Gitanjali'. Alliteration and antithesis are often resorted to by Basava, and his sayings remind us of the Hebrew prophets."

Basava was not an academic philosopher. He never schematised his views nor did he build what is called a philosophical system. Indian commentators and reformers are mostly non-academic, for they care very little for theories, immune from logical errors. Moreover, Indian thinkers, whether academic or non-academic, only explain the old Indian philosophy and their originality lies principally in matters of interpretation. Basava is no exception to this. Following the Āgamic tradition he preaches the reality of God, of man and of the world. This robust outlook enlivened Basava to be wakeful to the flow-tides and ebb-tides of the material life.

There is much that is common between Buddha and Basava. Both raised their voices against caste system; both emancipated women from slavery; both preached their religion in the language of the common man; both advocated the purity of character. Basava, like Buddha, strongly insisted on the sacredness of life. According to him, he is really high-born whose compassion and kindness goes out to all living beings. Man cannot give life and therefore he should not inflict death. Man stands on a higher level than other creatures. The tiger and hawk kill for food but man has no need of animal food since the earth gives him enough from her abundance. Basava lays stress on the purity

of food, purity of thought and purity of action as essential for man's salvation. Buddha preached the doctrine of individual salvation; Basava, though he was alive to the importance of individual salvation, did not ignore the law of association. For Basava, salvation did not lie in self-immolation, but it lay in suffering for the sake of others. Both condemned sacrifices and opined that the sacrificial offerings were like bribes to win the goodwill of Gods who are powerless to intervene in the workings of the law of cause and effect (Karma).

Buddha ignored the economic side of life, for he was more a contemplative, while Basava was a man of stern and bold action without ignoring the contemplative side of life. Basava was pained to see the appalling poverty and ignorance of the masses. He grew indignant at the wretched condition of the labourers and strove hard to ameliorate their condition. He forthwith set up a Brotherhood of Labour, preached the dignity of manual labour and raised the status of labourers in the eyes of society. It is no wonder if the rank and file of Basava's followers consisted mainly of labourers. He was a friend of the fallen and a brother of the destitute. Basava went directly to the motives. He dealt supremely with the labour problem, with the poor and the lowly. For this reason, whether we read his denunciations of the rich or of his tenderness towards the suffering poor, his outlook is always the same. What he aimed at was the healing of the body of wounded humanity by a vast inflowing of divine love. Permanent improvement in human conditions of labour is possible only where this spirit of love and unselfish service is realised and understood. Without this inner spirit, all labour movements are little else than the building up of houses on the sand of sea-shore to be washed away by each incoming tide

This condition of labour and its amelioration had its counterpart in Christ and the Christian movement. Labour in the Greek and Roman world was mainly performed by slaves. We must understand clearly the immense significance of this fact and mark the treatment which these slaves received. In the domestic life, among the Romans, there seems to have been only occasional cruelty towards

slaves. But on the large estates in the country and on the huge sea-galleys which brought corn to Rome, the sufferings of slaves were appalling. It is difficult even to picture how vast that cruelty was and how terrible the slave mortality. Desperate efforts at revolt on the part of the slaves were always followed by the most savage acts of repression, till fear entered into their very bones, and revolt became impossible on account of terror. Slavery was probably the greatest of all the causes of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. It corrupted the rulers themselves and made them in turn the slaves of their own vices and evil possessions.

A very large portion of the early Christian converts was gathered from this slave community. For many centuries the slaves must have outnumbered the freemen in the Christian Church. Nietzsche is accurate in his picture to this extent. Christianity was a slave religion, in so far as the slaves welcomed its message first and were the most numerous early disciples. This fact, however, was not its shame but its glory. For Christ came to seek and to save those that were lost.

Basava had to face the problem of capital next in importance to that of labour. Among the ancient Hindus, an elaborate social organisation which was codified in religious law, made any capitalistic system of trade and industry carried out on an extensive scale impossible. The reason for this is not far to seek. Religion in the East, whether in India, Palestine or Persia, has been intimately interwoven with the social and domestic life making a dharma for each individual. Owing to this the area of self-interest was strictly and duly limited. But after the fall of the Republics in India, the social and religious restraints upon the accumulation of capital suddenly broke down. The scope for unlimited competition and for capitalism on a large scale became practical for the first time in India. The opportunity was seized by greedy adventureis, and the noble families succumbed to the temptation of getting rich quickly. This undermining of the whole economic structure of society began under the Mauryan Empire. Aśoka saw the danger and enlisted every support of literature and statesmanship in order to bring back the

simpler living of the old Republican days. But the vicious circle of capitalism, once entered, it is not easy to escape from it. Its effect in degrading the poor, in oppressing the slave, in establishing vast areas of luxurious wealth told upon the vital energies of the state.

Similar was the capitalistic condition in the days of Basava. What Basava brought to the solution of the problem of capital, was the social idea of possession. In his Brotherhood of Labour no member possessed any property as his own. There was a continuous redistribution of wealth, a constant re-apportionment according to need, instead of according to greed. The world is not slow in learning that this teaching of Basava is eminently practical and that wealth accumulated abnormally in the individual hands becomes a monstrocity. We are beginning to understand that there are no fixed individual rights of property, rights fixed and final like the laws of nature. On the other hand, there are definite duties of property, if the principle of Brotherhood is to be observed.

Basava showed by his precept and example, that family is the unit of life and that inviolability of the married life is the essence of family. In India there has been a deep religious spirit which penetrated the domestic life and made it pure and healthy. This sacramental ideal of the family has been the greatest purifying thought which has saved Indian civilization from decay. But in our own generation, a terrible injury has been done to the home life, owing to the pressure of the new industrial conditions. If no steps are taken, this wrong which has already penetrated, may soon become irreparable. In the neighbourhood of the great modern Indian towns, the social and domestic fabric of the villages which is built upon the sanctity of marriage, is rapidly being broken up. There can be no longer any doubt with regard to this fact and its alarming moral consequences.

To Adam Paradise was home, to a good man home is paradise; for the felicities of home are the most delightful that earth can afford. There is a proverb which says that a hundred men may make an encampment, but it takes a woman to make a home. That is why Basava says that woman is the angel of home. Next to the home

comes, in the opinion of Basava, Math or monastery, which then served as the school. Man's future will be determined by the home and school. The child becomes largely what it is taught in the school. Charity begins at home. We build our character there, and what we become is largely determined by our training in the school and our living in the home environments. For true education is to realise at every step how our training and knowledge have organic relation with our surroundings.

While Basava so practically upheld the sanctity of the family life, he carried its idea into the wider social sphere. The smaller family of the individual home is to be realised in the larger sphere of humanity itself, for humanity is the family of God. Finally the Kingdom of God is to be established here upon earth. All prophets proclaimed: "The Kingdom of God is within you, and it must be brought upon earth." There is a long line of prophets who have been at work to achieve the balance, but it eludes the grasp. The idea of establishing the kingdom of God upon earth remains a far off ideal.

An idea of religion as adumbrated by Basava may be deduced from his sayings. Basava does not deny the world and man, for he says, that world is the workshop of God and man is his hand work. His religion is centred around man, the divine man. Human personality is not a mean thing, its value is great since it can come in union with the Divine personality. There are enough possibilities in man and his duty or religion consists in expressing them fully. The higher self of man is to be realised and the lower self sublimated. Love is the best expression of the true self and all the virtues that emanate from love such as kindness, charity, sympathy and non-violence are to be welcomed. These virtues are to be realised through self-effort and the service of man or *Dāsōha*. This is the sum and substance of Basava's religion; and in this idea of religion Basava anticipates many a modern prophet like Rāma Mōhan Roy, Swāmi Dayānanda, Vivekananda and Gandhiji.

The epoch of modern Hinduism began with Rāma Mōhan Roy, for he started the new spirit of the age. He was born at a time

when Hinduism was at its lowest ebb. His spirit was essentially the spirit of a reformer who could see the needs of his age and supply the motive force for re-construction. His interest in religion was not merely academical but he lived it. It is said that he went through Tantric and Vedantic disciplines to prepare himself for direct spiritual knowledge. He was fond of the worship of God through Gāyatri, just as Basava was pleased with the worship of God through *Ṣaḍakṣari* or *Oṁnamaḥ śivāya*. In Gāyatri Rām Mōhan found the saving grace and illuminating power, as indicating the unity of the cosmic spirit with the individual soul. Like Basava Rām Mōhan pinned his faith on the supreme creator and was the consistent preacher of monotheism. His saying runs thus: "None of the ecclesiastical gods can be inferred from the various assertions of the Vedas because the Vedas prove nothing but the unity of the Supreme Being." Rām-Mōhan founded the Brahma Samāja which was a prayer-house open to all. Here the one omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God is to be contemplated.

The Brahma Samāja founded by Rām Mōhan gradually drifted towards Christanity, and in the hands of Kēshab Chandra Sen it became westernised. Against his attempts and his Samāja Dayānanda rose in revolt. His revolt was purely a revolt against westernisation. Dayānanda, a profound Vedic scholar as he was, founded the Ārya Samāja with a view to revive the Vedic studies and discipline in India. Like Basava Dayānanda was a critic of the social system prevalent in his time. Fitness is not by birth but by character was his motto. He recognised the aristocracy of character and selected his disciples even from the men of low castes. He abolished early marriages, encouraged foreign travels, admitted students both male and female to his Gurukula; allowed the females to read the Vedas and opened the sacred lore to the Harijans. Dayānanda read life synthetically and saw the economy of all the forces in life, as Basava found it in the hierarchy of Ṣaṭsthala. He was never for the elimination of any one of them — Karma, Upāsanā and Jñāna — in any stage of life; for full adaptation to life requires all these as integral forces.

In the present day cultural and religious life of India Śri Rāmakṛṣṇa together with Vivekananda is a potent force to be reckoned with During the early years of Rāmakṛṣṇa the Brahma Samāja had its heyday. The intellectual spirit of Rām Mōhan together with the aestheticism of Dēvēndranātha and ecstatic faith of Kēshab Chandra Sēn had made the Brahma Samāja a strong and effective movement amongst the cultured people. Orthodox Hindu faith was shaken to its foundation. Rāmakṛṣṇa by virtue of intense Sādhanā realised and proved the dynamism and potentiality of the orthodox faith. He imparted this realisation to Vivekananda to give it practical shape. Vivekananda organised a church, which, like the Anubhava Maṇṭapa of Basava, had embodied the social and spiritual principles. He saw God in every human being and his heart bled for the poor, the weak and the down-trodden. To serve them was to serve Nārāyaṇa. His Church does not observe caste rigidities, for it welcomes people of all castes; the fitness is of character and not of birth. Basava was meek like a lamb but brave like a lion. In his personality is seen the harmony of humility and valour, of love and power, of Bhakti and Śakti. In the life of Vivekananda we find a similar strain. He was bold and heroic yet he was mild and humble. The blending of the mutually conflicting qualities has given a fine shade to the character of Vivekananda. He was attracted by the divine love but felt that the delicate plant of love could not flourish on the soil of earth without the constant protection of power. In the words of Basava Bhakti cannot thrive without the protecting hand of Śakti.

Another prophet, who makes religion the basis for social reform like Basava, is Gandhiji. Gandhiji believed in the Vedas but he did not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. Basava also believed in the Śṛti, whether it be Veda or Āgama, but he did not accept every word of the Scripture as infallible. Such truths of the Scripture were acceptable to him as are true to reason and experience. Gandhiji believed in Varṇāśrama Dharma based more on quality than on caste. Basava never favoured the four-fold division of mankind either on the basis of quality or on the basis of caste. All

men are equal, he said, and fitness is not by birth but by character. To Basava Kāyaka is Kailāsa, work is worship. Gandhiji also struck the same note when he said, "The noblest of all aims is the worship of God and the highest form of worship consists in doing the work of God by living in obedience to the moral law and by disinterested service to humanity." Gandhiji founded an Āśrama which was characterised by the observance of vows like the vows of celibacy, of truth, of non-violence, of non-thieving and non-possession. There was yet another important vow, known as the vow of the Svadesi. Basava was very fond of observing the vows; it is said that he himself practised thirty six vows including the above ones. He admonished his followers to lead a moral life based on vows. Basava gave a fillip to the development of cottage industries by encouraging the various occupations like farming, weaving, dying, and numerous others which were then considered as base and unholy. He taught the dignity of manual labour by giving it a religious significance. Thus he laid a new foundation for the economics of the land. Gandhiji too upheld the dignity of manual labour and caused the cottage industries to develop in the face of the big industries. The follower of Gandhiji have analysed the benefits accruing from the cottage industry. They say that cottage industry in contrast to big industry is, by its very nature, socialistic in character. The essence of socialism is non-exploitation and equality or near equality of incomes. It is difficult to justify the labour theory of value upon which Marx and Engels based some of their important conclusions. No economist, worth the name, considers today the theory sound or correct. But granting its correctness, cottage industry satisfies the best requirements of the theory. It leaves no surplus value for any employer. If this is true Basava might be considered as the forerunner of socialisms

Basava had great respect and regard for women, for he saw in every woman Mahādēvi, the divine Mother. He gave to her an equality of status, an independent outlock and freedom of movement. Basava never called woman weaker sex for he knew that she is the reservoir of spiritual strength. Gandhiji's regard for woman is no less great. He castigates man for his brute nature and woman for falling a victim

to man's lust. He once said, "I wish I could be a woman under such circumstances and try out whether I could successfully resist the brute in man." Again he remarked, "To call woman the weaker sex is a libel, it is man's injustice. If by strength is meant brute strength then indeed is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not great courage? Without her man could not be. If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with women."

Basava was a great prophet. The greatness of man does not consist in his isolation from his fellow-men. A man, no matter whether he is regarded as a prophet or an incarnation of divinity, lives as other men. The physical plane is the same for all and the only distinction is in the moral and spiritual spheres. Christ was a carpenter's son and lived an humble life and mixed with humble folk. Buddha obtained his daily bread by begging and lived on terms of familiarity with his disciples. Basava led simple life mixing with the common men, though he was a minister. These prophets were only different from other men in their thoughts, in their manner of speech and in their moral and spiritual vision. The evidence of history and the trend of human nature would be belied if there were no discordant notes in the chorus of admiration elicited by Basava's work and character. It may be stated as a fact that the greater the man, the larger the number of his detractors. The time comes when the voices lifted in blame are stilled and the worth of a man is placed beyond criticism. Pilate, priests and the Pharisees have passed away; who now speaks ill of Jesus? Buddha was maligned by Devadatta and others spoke ill of him, but time has silenced those voices. Basava was criticised by the calumniators, but their voices are now drowned. Today Basava is acknowledged as one of the great prophets that the world has ever seen.

KUMARA SWAMIJI

I have no fear of streaking snake,
Nor point of sword, nor tongue of flame;
There's one thing makes my whole heart shake:
I tremble at the hazardous game
Another's wife or wealth may make!
In days of old, Rāvaṇa was bold,
But soon Rāvaṇa's knell was tolled:
Only to think, my heart grows cold,
*O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!**

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

The philosophy of Basava is not the dry as dust philosophy of the Scholastics. It is not a 'ballet of bloodless categories' to borrow a phrase from the British philosopher F. H. Bradley. Basava's is a philosophy of life pulsating with the rhythm of life. Learned men may reel out of it this and that ponderous system of doctrine and dogma. But this is not to our purpose here. We are interested in his philosophy of life, nearest to man and his struggles of life. What is the life that we live here? How do we live and by what do we live? What is the inner life which is within us and the life that we live without? What is the nature of the world in which we live? Is the world in which we live a curse or a blessing or a challenge or an opportunity? Do we live alone in this world? Or are we enveloped by a Divine Being who is in us, in the world outside us, in the stars, in stock and stone, a Divine Being who is immanent and yet transcendent? This inscrutable Divine Being — is He an object of our knowledge? Do we know Him as we know the other things? Or do we feel His presence in our innermost being? How do we reach Him? By what means do we realise Him here and now? — These are the questions which Basava seeks to answer. The answers to these questions arise as sparks struck on the anvil of life. God, the individual soul and the world are the three truths of the philosophy of life of Basava on which he throws the great light of his intellect with which is fused his great emotion of devotion turned towards that Divine Being without whom, without remembering whom,

Basava finds it difficult to live. His entire philosophy may be summed up in three propositions viz. God is real, the world is a challenge and an inspiration and the goal of life is to attune itself to living in communion with the Divine Being and making life a harmony. (*Liṅgāṅga sāmarasya*).

In Basava we find synthesized the life of contemplation and the life of action. His is not a philosophy of complete withdrawal from the world of men and thus seeking one's own salvation. His again is not a philosophy of mere hectic activity in life, of one who merely becomes involved in in mundane affairs paying heed to success as the world calls it and paying no heed to the treasures of one's own inner life. His philosophy strikes a balance between *Pravṛtti* or the participation in the world's work and *Nivṛtti* or a withdrawal from the world's work. On the one side there is the philosophy of activism which was upheld by the Bhagavad Gita and pursued by many a great Karma Yōgin in India. On the other is the most intimate private life of the individual in the depths of which man is in eternal communion with God, the soul of his soul, the 'immanent dweller' or Antaryāmin to use the expression of the Upaniṣads. This is an aspect of religion indicated by Professor Alfred North Whitehead who spoke of 'what one does with his solitariness' as constituting the essence of the inner life of religion. The balance between the outer and the inner in man, the *bahiraṅga* and the *antaraṅga* is a very delicate balance and this has been very successfully maintained in the philosophy of Basava. He was an active reformer and at the same time *Bhakti Bhāṇḍāri*, the very treasure of devotion. In Basava's philosophy we find a confluence, a harmony and a synthesis of the three aspects of human personality — thought, feeling and action (*Jñāna*, *icchā* and *kriyā*). Only all these three elements have been transformed, transmuted and chastened in Basava, so to say. In his philosophy, intellectual understanding and an emotional rapport with God are found fused. He has had the thrill of ecstasy, or *Ānanda*, which became his and suffused his every activity. He walked on earth like an illumined individual radiating life eternal round about him. This philosophy of life

of Basava has to be gathered from his sayings which have come floating to us down these eight hundred years and more. Out of the innumerable sayings ascribed to him there are plenty of those sayings which ring so true and authentic that we can cull out of them the genuine philosophy of life of Basava. The flavour of his life, the fragrance of his being come to us in an intimate way when we hear his vacanas recited. One hundred and eight sayings of Basava have been culled by Dr. L. Basavarāju in his '*Basava Vacanāmṛta*' published by Basava Samiti, Bangalore. I base my own rendering of the philosophy of Basava on the vacanas chosen from this collection of sayings. I have translated them in my own way and have employed them on the basis of my exposition of the philosophy of Basava rendering the ideas in as direct and simple a manner as possible. The translations I have made are rather free and my hope is that they bring out the substance of the vacanas relevant for my thesis.

Basava confesses his ecstasy of knowing God's love by saying

> "It was like warmth hidden in water,
> like the taste concealed in the juicy plant
> like the fragrance with which the flower is redolent
> and like the fresh sweet love of
> a virgin bride"

Basava is impressed by the all-pervading presence of God and says:

> "Look where I will, I find Thee there
> The vast expanse that meets
> my eye is filled by Thee
> Thou art the eye of the Universe
> Thou art its beaming face
> Thine hands are outstretched everywhere
> O Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva, I find
> Thy footprints evident everywhere".

Again

> "Thou art as wide as the Universe
> as high as the heavens
> Vaster still than all these
> Thy feet are planted there
> in all the depths of this world
> but Thy crown or diadem
> shines forth beyond this vast Universe.

Thou art difficult of access, Thou art
invisible and Thou art peerless.
And yet, O lord Thou hast constricted
Thyself in order that I may hold Thee
in the palm of my hand."

Basava's monotheism expresses itself in these words which are an echo of the vedic saying '*Ekaṁ sat viprāḥ bahudhā vadanti*' — 'What exists is one but sages speak of it variously'.

"God is one but his names are legion!
He is one and one only like the
husband who is one and one only
for a faithful wife.
O Kūḍala Saṅgama, what shall
I say of them who wander away
from this one God and vainly
worship at the shrines of false
Gods".

Basava enumerates these false gods for whom offerings are made for fear of them and to placate those blood-thirsty Godlings in whom there can be no real shelter for the human soul. Here Basava does clearly distinguish religion which is the religion of fear and full of superstition from the religion of love and selfless devotion in which alone is the final resting place for the human spirit.

To be blessed with this true religion one needs the grace of God. Basava has an undiminished faith in the abounding grace of God. Basava gives expression to his experience of the grace of God in these words:

By Thy grace even the dry twig
becomes green and sprouts afresh
By Thy grace anything sterile
becomes fertile
By Thy grace will poison itself turn into nectar
By Thy grace all things become
profuse and abundant, O Lord
Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva."

Religion is a matter of sincere faith in the existence of God. Often those who have no real faith in God pretend to believe in His existence. They also make a show of it. They are pompous and

demonstrative in their worship of the Deity. But ostentation is no real piety. They are hypocrites who call out 'Lord, Lord' for every one to hear but really speaking they are men with little or no faith. Of them says Basava:

> "They have no faith in God, no trust in Him
> And so when They call on Him, it is
> all empty and hollow —
> These know not what faith means
> If one full of faith calls on the
> Lord he responds 'Lo, I am here'.
> If one who has no faith in Him
> Calls on the name of God he is
> like one who blows his trumpet
> from the top of a tree to which
> no body pays any heed".

Vaiṣṇava teachers have similarly spoken of this as '*Mahā Viśvāsa*', the great faith that God is our Redeemer. That God really responds to the cry of the human heart when this cry is the cry of intense love and devotion is expressed thus:

> "Some say that God pays heed to song
> Some others say that he heeds the words of scripture
> But to my mind God does not favour song or
> scripture but favours only the deep unspoken affection
> of the human heart."

Life is compared by Basava to a bazaar where all things that men need are attractively exhibited. He who pays a fair price for them may get them. God's shop is a fair price shop. He does not extort but demands a just price. Basava says that this bazar has God as its merchant. He neither wants profit nor is prepared to suffer loss. The price that he demands is honest labour. Labour is the honest price that he demands for things that he may buy from the market of this world, the merchandise of which is controlled and regulated by God, the great shop-keeper. These ideas are presented by Basava in one of his sayings. The import of this saying is that no one gets any reward in this world without work. The lesson is 'Labour ye, therefore' to get the good things of life. They are not for those who do not work for them. To work is to worship — (*Kāyakavē Kailāsa*).

The man who has set his heart on God has all evil in him purged. His desires become chastened. His passions are purified. Basava expresses this idea of his in this saying:

"One who loves the Lord can have no lust
in him
One who resorts to God has no irritation
in him
One who has reaped the profit of love
has no love for any other profit
One who is tranquil has no delusions
in him
Purity of heart is impossible to him
who is full of pride and jealousy
The Lord resides only in those
who are ripe of soul."

This idea is reaffirmed when he says that 'the Lord resides within those whose deeds correspond to their words'. Sincerity thus is the keynote of true devotion which must express itself in every act of its votary as Gandhi would say.

Basava, the great devotee that he is, is filled with longing for God. His heart panteth for God as the thirsty hart in the wilderness panteth for water. This intense longing is constant in him and will not cease until he has attained God. His longing for God is expressed thus:

"The bird Cakōra is filled with longing for the moon
The lotus is filled with longing for the sun
The bee is filled with longing for the flower's nectar
And I am filled with longing for Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva".

That the ultimate resort of man is in God and nothing else can save him or salvage him from the slough of despondency is echoed picturesquely in these following lines:

"A poor beast has fallen into a pit.
What can it do to save itself except
to helplessly kick its legs hither and thither?
It cries out 'Lord, Lord,
pull me out of this morass' — Am I
not the beast (*paśu*) and Thou the Lord of beasts (*Paśupati*)
Save me ere the world beats me to death
and ere the world puts the blame on you".

In this saying there is the suggestion of the three philosophical principles of Śaiva philosophy hinted. The three principles referred to are *Paśu*, *Pāśa* and *Paśupati*, the beast, the bondage, the Lord of beasts.

Basava likens his body and soul to a Vīṇā and prays to Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva thus:

"Make this body of mine the
    body of thy Vīṇā
Make my head the gourd of it
    on which it rests.
Make my nerves the strings
    and my fingers the tuning sticks
Play then thy music through
    me — O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama
Strike your music on this
    musical instrument of my body.

Man must fashion himself as the instrument for the Divine Musician to play his Music on him. It means that man must live in such a way and must develop his sensibilities in such a manner that his body, mind and spirit all come to be attuned to the universal harmony of God. It calls for an idea like that of Aurobindo that the individual soul must become a channel of expression of the Divine life which marks a Coalescence of the individual will with the universal will. It is a perfect attunement or at-one-ment (*Aikya*) of the individual with God.

Basava longs to become filled with God in such a way that his whole being—his body, his senses, mind and spirit become merged in Him. He says:

"I shall fill my words with the nectar of
    your name!
I shall fill my eyes with Thy beautiful form
I shall fill my mind with Your sweet memory
I shall fill my ear with words of Thy fame
    O Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva,
I shall fill myself whole and entire
    in Thy lotus feet".

When one is thus filled with God the world in which one lives

becomes the stage which is set for the advance of the soul towards perfection. The way in which Basava looks upon the world and the life in the world as a necessary prelude to a perfect life is characteristic of him. What he says reminds us of what the poet Keats said in one of his oft quoted letters that 'this vale of tears is the vale of soul-making'. Basava refers to this world as God's smithy:

"This world of mortals is the smithy of God
Where souls are minted as so many coins.
The coin that rings true here rings true hereafter".

And so the life that we live here in this world is the preparation, prelude, and probation for a higher life of perfection. So this life has not to be spurned. The life that we are given to live in this world is a challenge and an inspiration. This world is a ladder to heaven. You must ascend to heaven by these very steps. So, says Basava, Stir yourself up betimes before it becomes too late. Catch hold of the opportunities so that you may get the best of the life that you live here. Do not postpone living the good life. Procrastination is the thief of time. If you do neglect your opportunities you will find yourself too soon in a helpless condition sans strength, sans health and sans energy. So says Basava:

"Ere the temples above thy ear
    begin to show grey
Ere the jaw sags of senility
Ere the teeth fall
Ere the back becomes bent
Ere you become helpless
Ere you need crutches to walk on
Ere your frame becomes wasted
    and inclines itself to lie low in death
Come, come to worship the Lord".

Again

"Do not say then and now, or
sometime hence
Surrender thyself at this very
    moment to the lord
Today is the day of thinking
    of the Lord and reaching Him

Now is the auspicious moment
Do not postpone it to the next day
Today is better than tomorrow
to worship the Lord in
devotion and Love".

Mere learning will not lead to devotion. So one should not pride in his learning or his other accomplishments. All accomplishments are vain without one's heart being filled with God.
Says Basava:

"Do you sport? Do you sing? Do you read?
All this is vain if you do not yield
Yourself in unqualified servitude to God
Even the peacock sports, even the strings
of a Musical instrument sing, even the
parrot repeats.
The Lord will not own any one who has
not love for Him in heart."

That people think of the world of the immortals and the world of the mortals as two distinct worlds is the greatest delusion according to Basava. He states this in the following words:

"O my brothers, don't you see that
the world of the Gods and the world of the
mortals are not two distinct worlds.
Speaking the truth is to be in the world of the Gods
Speaking falsehood is to be in the world of the mortals
Good conduct is heaven
evil conduct is hell
O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama, you are
the eternal witness to this truth".

Here is the blending of religion and ethics in the philosophy of Basava.

That the Divine Being is immanent in the human heart is the eternal miracle. God is so vast and high, man is so limited and low but the marvel of marvels is that man becomes the vehicle of God and that he mirrors God in him. The Macrocosm is reflected in the Microcosm.

"The world is in Thee and
Thou art in me.

The huge elephant is reflected
in a tiny mirror
So likewise Thy image in me
O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama."

Rich and pious people build temples to proclaim the glory of God but poor Basava confesses that he is unable to do what these people do. So he says that he is going to dedicate his own body as the temple of God:

"Those who have, build a temple to God
But what can a have not like me do?
My legs are the pillars of the temple
that I am going to build. My
body itself is that temple. My
head is the golden pinnacle.
Listen O Lord, The temple built of brick and mortar
tumbles down in decay but this
moving temple of thine knows
no ruin."

All this is a matter of spiritual endeavour or *Sādhana* but *Sādhana* is not an easy matter. As one of the Upaniṣads puts it, it is sharp like walking a razor's edge — *kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā*. It calls for a spirit of adventure. It calls for a heroism which is not deterred by any obstacle. Humility there is and at the same time there is need for heroism. What makes one feel humble and small is the sense of the difficulty of ascent. But this should not make one feel unnerved at the difficulty of ascent to the Goal. Basava cheers one who has embarked on this endeavour. He puts heart in him in these encouraging words:

"The elephant is huge but the goad that controls it is small, but is it indeed to be called small for the control that it effectively exercises on the elephant? The rocky hill is big but the diamond that is quarried from it is insignificantly small in size. But is it indeed to be called small for the value of scintillation that it has? Darkness is dense but the tiny candle that dissipates it is small. But is it to be regarded small on this account? The mind that contemplates Thee is small but its remembrance of Thee can no longer be counted as small, O Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēvā."

Basava then says:

> "The power of knowledge destroys ignorance.
> The power of light dissipates darkness.
> The power of truth is the foe of all untruth
> The Saraṇa's experience of God is the
> sole cure for worldliness."

Basava reprimands all those who revel in pomp and grandeur neglecting the development of soul's excellence in these words:

> "You ride an elephant or a horse
> You smear your bodies with unguent
> But with all this finery you have
> not striven to know the truth.
> You have not sown the seeds of virtue
> You ride the elephant of pride
> and precipitate yourself for a fall
> You have created a hell to yourself
> without knowing Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama."

Basava spurns the wearing of the external symbols of piety without real inward piety in these words: "Of what use is the wearing of the symbols of piety on your person when you lust for feeding your body with rich food and when your eyes lust for other women? When you do not tread the path of piety. Wearing these symbols of piety is vain."

Every individual must first think of reforming himself before he goes out to reform others. Says Basava:

> "Who are you to strive to straighten the
> Crookedness of this world?
> Think of straightening yourself first,
> Rectify first your body and your mind
> Our Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva
> will not approve of those who
> grieve for others instead of
> grieving for one's own imperfections."

The true devotee of God is marked by great courtesy of life with which he conducts himself in the world. Says Basava: "The true devotee is one who bows to every other devotee.

> "Soft speech is for him the repetition of the holy word
> Soft speech is the severest austerity
> Humility is the one quality which is liked by the Lord."

In a beautiful saying Basava proclaims the art of good speaking in the following words:

"When you speak the words that come
out of you must be like a string of pearls.
The words you speak must be
like the gems of the purest ray serene
The words you speak must
be clear like crystal
The words you speak must be
such as would be applauded by the Lord
The words that you speak must be
in consonance with the deeds
that you perform
Otherwise, Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama
will have none of it."

Mere asceticism will not carry us far. Mere mortification of the body has no special virtue and the one thing that matters is the purity of heart. This idea is expressed by Basava thus:

"The ant-hill has a serpent in it
If you beat the ant-hill
with a stick will the
serpent in it be killed?
Similarly you may crucify
the flesh but unless the
heart is purified, the Lord
will not approve all this physical
mortification."

Basava condemns all worship of God by proxy. To arrange to get worship done by another, by a priest has no virtue in it. Worship has to be a personal communion between the devotee and God. The Guru is just a mediator and his work ceases the moment the devotee and God are brought face to face with each other. Basava says:

"Worship you must yourself.
Worship of God by proxy is just
a conventional ceremonial —
Thou art difficult to be known that way, O Lord."

Basava disapproves mere philosophical debate, for like Omar

Khyayam he feels that those who wrangle, "argue about it and about and come from the same door through which they went." The one thing that really matters is not to decide whether dvaita is right or advaita is right but to be aware of the presence of God in the world and have a heart which melts with love for God and The Godly. Says Basava:

> "Of what use is it to debate
> on Dvaita or Advaita?
> Unless your heart melts for God and the Godly"

Unless you believe that all the unmoving and the moving are strung together in a single thread, what good will a web of words do for you?

A merely prolonged life on earth which is not filled with good deeds is a useless protraction of days. Instead, a crowded hour of glorious life is better than many years of an inglorious one. Says Basava:

> "A five-day span of a good life
> A four-day span of a good life
> A three-day span of a good life
> A two-day span of a good life
> A one-day span of a good life
> is the day that is really worth living — All else is vain".

A life of honest labour is the life of one who is really dedicated to God. It is much better to earn one's living with the sweat of his brow than carry on a parasitical existence. Says Basava:

> "Work on the soil, toil hard with
> Your limits — consecrate to the Lord
> the food that you thus earn
> and share it with others.
> Show me O Lord, the feet of such
> a devotee as this — His body
> is pure, his mind is pure, his
> conduct is pure the words that he speaks are holy.
> That teacher is great who
> has such a one as his
> disciple. His home is the veritable
> Kailāsa. Enter ye into this and
> worship the Lord. I bow to

such devotees. I place my
trust in them — O Kūḍala Saṅgama."

There is neither high nor low among men. What makes one high is love of God and what makes one low is lack of faith in God. What makes one high is good conduct and what makes one low is bad conduct. Says Basava:

"To me all the lovers of God are one.
Such is my faith. There is not
the slightest doubt in me about this
There is no high - born for me
nor low - born."

To Basava there is no occupation which is high or low. He believed in the dignity of labour. He enumerates a number of saints who were great lovers of God but who pursued their own humble avocations as washermen, as potters and the like.

Siriyāḷa, Mācayya, Kakkayya, Cannayya were saints who worked at their own avocations and became men of God. Basava thus does not attach importance to the caste or class in which a saint is born. The one thing that really mattered to him was what sort of an individual he himself was despite his caste or community, family or clan.

Basava finally came to the conclusion that compassion was the root of religion. He advocated kindliness to all things that exist. He refused to accept anything as religion in which there was no room for kindliness or compassion. Any religion that does not have this as its core was to him no religion. He thus gave a criterion by which to judge religion as true or false, as genuine or spurious. This is the criterion of universal religion which we have in Basava.

According to Basava the truly well - born are those who wish well of all beings. Sarvōdaya is the keynote of their life. The ordinary ethics of life which he propounded is to be found in the following famous words of his:

"Do not kill, do not steal, do not tell a lie
Do not be wrathful, do not be intolerant
of others. Do not praise yourself nor
reprimand others. This is internal purity.

> This is external purity. This is the only way
> by which you can commend yourself to God and win his
> approval."

Here is the sum and substance of the ethical teachings of all the religions of the world. This teaching is in perfect consonance with the fundamental ethical teachings of all the great prophets of the world like Buddha, Mahāvīra, Zoroaster, Confucius, Jesus and prophet Muhammad.

In uttermost humility Basava conceived of himself as the lowest of the low and yielded superiority only to those who loved the Lord. I am the least of men (Enaginta Kiriyarilla) said he, expressing his extraordinary humility. He looked upon all those who would show him his imperfections as the greatest friends and well-wishers. The words of those who sought to praise him were compared by him to golden spears (honna śūla) thrust into him. They caused him great pain instead of satisfaction. Such was his freedom from all egotism.

This is the story of the spiritual endeavour of Basava. This is the philosophy of life by which he lived. This is the torch of illumination that he has left as a precious legacy for mankind. This light shines evermore after eight hundred years after the birth of Basava. This is Basava's perennial philosophy of life, which is bound to have a universal appeal to mankind in all ages and climes.

M. YAMUNACHARYA

Lord, I am a bee
In the lotus of Thy feet;
Lo, my tongue is sweet
With nectar of Thy name;
My eyes are all aflame
With beauty of Thy face;
The very thought of Thee
Haunts all my nights and days;
My ears are filled, you see,
*With music of Thy praise!**

THE MESSAGE OF ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA

Man lives in several dimensions—such as physical, vital, mental and so on — at one and the same time though he is conscious only of one at a time. It has been possible for him to do so because the dimensions mentioned above are not isolated and separate from one another but are inter-penetrating, and they find their integration in a unitive existence of the human being. Since I want to deal here only with two dimensions, I need not go into the details of other dimensions. The two dimensions I am thinking of are the world of thought and the world of action. Sometimes these are referred to as the inner and the outer world – the two worlds, the poet Spender has spoken about and written.

Among men and women too there are usually two types of people: those who live predominantly in one of the dimensions, the inner world or the outer world, the world of consciousness or the world of sense objects; to be more explicit, they can be called the world of thought and the world of action. I have deliberately used the word predominantly, because it is impossible to live in any one of them exclusively. The inner and the outer worlds keep acting and reacting on each other and human consciousness or the conscious human being has to deal with both, though with varying emphasis. Those who live more in the inner world or in the world of thought and are conscious more of themselves and their thoughts than of the outer world are called introverts. The other type is more conscious of the outer world and comes under the category of extroverts.

There is a third type of persons however, which is not very common. These persons are equally at home in both the worlds, nay, they feel called upon to function in both the worlds and are not satisfied only with the one or the other. They look upon both these worlds as complementary and in their eyes each is incomplete without the other. Existence, life, being is integral and it does not make any difference beween the world of thought and the world of action. They have to harmonise with each other and a synthesis of thought and action has to be worked out. The path to the perfection of manhood and humanity lies in the direction of this synthesis, the synthesis not only of these, namely, the world of thought and the world cf action, but the harmonisation and synthesis of all the dimensions man can be aware of through the present as well as the potential and future powers of his own consciousness.

What I have been saying would be clearer if I cite some examples. Usually typical Western philosophers like Kant, Hegel and others are men of thought and they dominate that world. They scarcely think in terms of entering the field of action and moulding life according to their ideas and ideals. Even today, the great living Existentialist philosopher and author, Jean Paul Sartre, excuses himself from action by saying that 'writing' itself is action, action in self-discovery! Indian philosophers however, usually belong to another category. Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva were philosophers of the highest calibre but they were not satisfied with philosophising. They not only moulded their own lives according to the philosophy they preached but also tried to see that the society in which they lived was deeply affected by their philosophy. To give another example, I can say that Marx and Engels were men of thought while Lenin and Stalin were men of action. This does not mean that Lenin and Stalin did not contribute to thought; but their thought arose out of their attempts to apply the philosophy of Marx to the problems of the day.

The world of thought and the world of action differ from each other like theory and practice. A philosopher when out philosophising does build his thought structure on the basis of facts and experience

but once he begins to build his thought-system, there is no obstacle in his path to upset his theory. In the case of a man of action, he has to test his theories in the practical world of action. No theory is valid unless it is tested by practical application and no action can be explained logically except by the support of some theory. A theory without practice would be hanging in a vacuum and practice without a theory would be a movement without purpose and direction.

In essence, life is action and not thought. Man's life is much more so as he has developed self-consciousness and is aware of the purpose and direction of his own actions. There is need, therefore, of men of action who have a sound and noble theory of life, in order to lead humanity to its destiny of peaceful, happy, and progressive life. There is need of persons who have integrated personalities and who can show the people a path which is practical and a life which can be lived by all.

All this introduction was necessary to convey the great importance of high personages like Basava. He was a true leader of men. From his very early days he was aware of and alert about the grave defects which had entered into the lives of men and women of his times. While religious truths and moral principles have somewhat permanent validity, they are often dimmed and obscured by accretions and mis-interpretations on account of human weaknesses and limitations. It requires the insight of a philosopher, the boldness of a prophet, the earnestness of a reformer and the drive of a man of action to sweep the dust off the minds of men and give them a fresh outlook. That was what Basava did in those early days in the twelfth century in Karnāṭak. He revivified the faith of the people in the Vīraśaiva system of Śakti-Viśiṣṭādvaita; he declared that equality of all as well as of men and women was the rule in the kingdom of the spirit; he said that all obstacles created by Varṇa and caste should be swept away; he ridiculed the multiplicity of gods and gods made of stone and metal and what not; he gave the highest importance to ethical conduct; he showed how one could live a simple life while enjoying the high authority of a minister; he proved the potency of simple faith in God and the spirit of surrender with which a real devotee

could live in life; and above all, he proved to be a prophet to the people in their own language.

Karnāṭak has always been a land where orthodox as well as non-orthodox schools of thought and conduct have lived together. At times there might have been instances of intolerance but on the whole the spirit of religious tolerance has prevailed. Basava's life and message have a special significance from this point of view. There was a time when Jainism dominated the scene. The three great Ācāryas also had a vogue and even now the followers of Dvaita, Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita live side by side. Basava struck a new path and cut across not only Vedic ritualism but also across what is called the class system of Varṇāśrama. He emphasised internal purity and good conduct more than ceremonial and ritualistic procedures of physical observances and external cleanliness. He emphasised devotion to one God and worship of Him through service of mankind. He gave a call to all irrespective of caste and creed, rich and poor, man and woman. He aimed at the spiritual regeneration of the masses through simple faith in and devotion to God. His was a call to purity of thought and action, to worship through one's own duty and vocation in life.

He was a social reformer of the highest order. He had the insight to see and the boldness to declare that inequality of every type and gradations in social status were the enemies of spiritual sādhana and elevation. He declared a spiritual brotherhood for all who would seek the Kingdom of God, irrespective of class and caste, sex and status. Viewed from this point of view he was far ahead of his times. His was not a mere academic teaching. He sought to bring into practice what he preached. He was a great organiser and got together thousands of followers and established a spiritual academy called Anubhava Maṇṭapa.

Rightly understood his message is relevant even today. His impact was so great that he weaned vast masses from the evil of drink and drugs and converted millions to vegetarian fare. He swept away at one stroke artificial barriers of ceremonial purity and cumbersome rituals in which only the rich and leisurly classes could indulge.

His was a simple call to faith in God, devotion to truth, non-violence and pure life, worship through bread labour and equality of all before God. He aimed at a spiritual brotherhood shorn of sacerdotal hierarchy and hereditory aristocracy of religion. To him man and woman were equal in the field of spiritual sādhana, were equally beloved of God. He poignantly asks of what sex is soul? He threw open the doors of spiritual elevation to every one who would enter with a pure heart and an earnest desire.

His Vacanas, or Sayings, are of the simplest and yet they embody profound truths of the order of Upaniṣadic teaching. He has presented to us the essence of religion, which in other words is the quest of the human soul for the highest elevation.

R. R. DIWAKAR

Make of my body, Lord, the pole;
Make of my head, the gourd;
Make of my nerves the wires, O Lord,
And of my fingers the plectrum make;
Intone Thy two - and - thirty notes;
Thump on my heart to beat the time,
*O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord !**

SIGNIFICANCE OF ŚRĪ BASAVEŚVARA'S TEACHINGS TO THE WORLD

It is difficult to estimate the influence of a great mystic on the world. This influence works in many and often unknown ways. You never know in how far the awareness, the feelings and thoughts of mankind as a whole are influenced by a great mystic and reformer, that Basava certainly was.

The revolution in India at the moment in many aspects resembles the revolution Basava wanted in his time, but nobody knows how far the revolution he had inaugurated has influenced the revolution we witness today.

In the Western world of religion and science many things happen at the moment. All over the world the belief in the evolution of mankind, nature and the whole universe is growing (Teilhard de Chardin), but here again nobody knows as to how far this was influenced by Basava and the belief in the Śakti as the dynamic driving force of the growing universe and of growing humanity.

Basava was a very great mystic and he had the same experiences that every great mystic had. Important to Vīraśaiva and to humanity is the way he interpreted his experiences and how his contemporaries and later followers interpreted his insights. As in every religion this was and is being done in a different way at different times by different personalities. You cannot comprehend more than your inner experience allows and you have to express yourself in the context of your time.

Basava had to express himself in accordance with the light of the faiths living around him: Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Nestorian Christianity. The different Sthalas in Vīraśaivism are connected with the centres in Kuṇḍalinī-Yoga, but the way of meditating on the Liṅga on the open left palm is much safer than the concentration on the centres and gives the same results. The monotheism of Basava accords with Hinduism, much more than Jainism and Buddhism.

The religious and social revolution Basava brought about can be compared with the religious and social reform Protestantism brought into Christianity much later.

Vīraśaivism is an up to date religion, closer to Christianisty, Judaism and Western Gnostocism than any eastern religion I know.

In my opinion Western religion and Western philosophy could learn from Vīraśaivism that you can experience God immanently as Śakti, which means that if you talk about evolution or growth of the universe and mankind, you have to consider the universe and mankind as an organic unity unfolding itself in a certain direction (known only to Śakti, God, The Holy Ghost or the consciousness of the Universe and mankind as a whole and by no individual human being). In that case you can immanently get in tune with the universe and in harmony with the spiritual growth of mankind by finding out by introspection what is your unique task and contribution to this organic whole and order your life accordingly.

At the same time you can transcendently meet God as "The Other One" (Śiva). If your experience is genuine the innermost Self as Śakti (*Maria-Sophia*)[1] and God as the Other One (Śiva) go together in full harmony. There is no conflict as there has so often been in the opinion of the Western churches and in Western philosophy. But there is more, the significance and the influence of Basava has not ended yet.

J. M. HONDIUS

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1 Maria-Sophia—otherwise called Divine wisdom in the Orthodox Theology.

TREND OF THOUGHTS IN VEDOPANIṢADS AND BASAVĒŚVARA'S VACANAS

The reforms introduced by Śrī Basavēśvara, the great savant of the 12th century, were often such as could be said that he anticipated the modern reforms as regards equality between men and women, between men of different castes and creeds, between men of different occupations and status, be they princes or peasants. This led many persons to think that the reforms were against the Hindu religion and in particular against the Vedas. Even a Liṅgāyat Professor like Sākhare goes to the length of stating in his Introduction to 'Liṅgadhāraṇa Candrike' that Liṅgāyats are not Hindus. He apparently relies on the observation of Enthoven in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics' which states: "The Liṅgāyats have not been inaptly described as a peaceful race of Hindu Puritans though it may be questionable how far the rejection of many of the chief dogmas of Brāhmanic Hinduism leaves them the right to be styled Hindus at all". Śrī Vetur Prabhākara Śāstry has in his introduction to Telugu Basava Purāṇa repeatedly stated that Liṅgāyats do not believe in Vedas. The notion is so common that I find it stated even in a student's text book called 'Ancient Indian History' by B. N. Rāma Reddy, that Basavēśvara 'rejected the authority of Vedas!' On the other hand most of the religious works of Liṅgāyats such as 'Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi' stress the point that the religion of Liṅgāyats is Vedic. Doctor Radhakrishnan did well, therefore, in his Foreword to 'Liṅgadhāraṇa Candrike' to state that Professor Sākhare is

taking a somewhat narrow view of the spirit of Hinduism. K. Subramaṇyam, M.A.,B.L., Tagore Law Professor, observed as follows: "In the 12th century this ancient creed was revived and established on a sound cosmopolitan basis by Sri Basavēśvara of Kalyāṇa against the inroads of Parochial Smṛtic Brāhminism." The observation about Liṅgāyats in Thurston's Castes and Tribes of Southern India vol. IV page 236 is more apt: "They reverence Vedas but disregard the later commentaries on which Brāhmins rely. Their faith purports to be primitive Hindu faith cleared of all priestly mysticism."

The early Āryans worshipped many gods like Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, Yama, Mātariśva, and others. The next step of improvement in their ideas was that each god was considered, as the Supreme Deity when that God was being worshipped. In the final stage, it was stated God is one though the Vipras call him by different names.[1] Unfortunately this stand gradually degenerated and by the time of Śrī Basavēśvara, men began to worship all sorts of deities, devils, demons, and goblins, with the result that Śrī Basavēśvara had to exclaim with disgust:

In vain oblations offer
    and blessings beseech of
Mārayya, Bīrayya — devil and demon;
Kāḷayya, Dūḷayya and Kētayya (who feed),
    on infant, maid and woman,
    heavy with child.
Diverse gods in diverse places
    niched in plant, flower,
    tank and well;
    in town and hamlet
dwell the dumb deities
    under the sheltering span
    of the banyan tree.
Pity them that supplicate
    these seamy shapes,

1 Ekaṁsatviprābahudhāvadanti agnim, mamam, mākariśvānamāhuḥ'
Ṛgveda 1 - 164 - 460

while Thou remain,
The Bestower All!

Śrī Basavēśvara declared as the Vedas of yore declared that God is one though the names differ;

Names many,
Thou art but ONE
E'en as the chaste spouse
knows none but her lord.
Take heed and kneel not
to strange Gods.
Or you face the frown of His wrath
smiting off your nose and ear.
What manner of men — they
who crave for crumbs
from frippery faiths?
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama.

In the early days, the Ṛṣis prayed for victory in war, increase in their cattle wealth, food for men and cattle and such other temporary earthly happiness. As their conception of God changed, we also find them praying for Mōkṣa *i.e.*, immortality, to Tryaṁbaka Śiva.[2] As will be clear from Sāyaṇa's bhāṣasya for the word 'Tryambaka', Parama-Śiva who is thought of in this connection is not Śiva, one of the Trinity but the originator of the three gods Brahma, Viṣṇu and Rudra.[3] Śrī Basavēśvara goes further and says he wants neither the position of Brahma nor the position of Viṣṇu and not even the position of Rudra but that he would be content to stay on earth serving the servants of God:

I aspire not to Brahma's status
nor to that of Viṣṇu
nor of Rudra either.
I never crave for such distinction.
But this my constant aim
that Thy Grace grant

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2 Tryambakam yajamahe sugandhim vṛṣtivardhanam
Urvārukamiva bandhanānmṛtyormukṣīya māmṛtāt
Ṛgveda. VII. 59. 12.

3 Tryambakam trayāṇām brahma viṣṇu rudrānām pikaram.

as my life's consummation
Thy great devotees' holy feet
as fitting benediction.
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

This wish to lead a useful life in this world alone reminds us of the injunction in Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad that a man should wish to live his full term of hundred years working without any intention of gaining any profit from it, so that he may not be affected by the work he does.[4] Lord Basavēśvara declares:

Of this, Thou and Thy saints
be witness as I avow —
that I keep no store
neither for today or tomorrow,
be it a strand of gold
Or a shred of cloth.
All that I have and possess
but to *Śaraṇas* alone belong.
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.
I plough the field and cultivate
for the worship of the *Guru*.
To serve the Liṅga, I ply a trade.
I serve another, and my wage render
as *Jaṅgama* Dāsōha.
Whate'er work I undertake
Thy just reward e'er awaits.
All rewards received from Thee
to thine own service I dedicate.
Thou be witness to my vow.
"Thy wealth to Thy cause" —
My Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

This conception of work without looking for the result as found in Īśā Upaniṣad is the basis on which Bhagavadgītā[5] stands and in it, it is called *Yōga*, while Basavēśvara calls it *Kāyaka*. Men's work in the world is the test, the world itself being the mint of God in which men are tested just as coins are tested in mints. Just as a

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4 Kurvanneveha karmāṇi jijīviṣecchatam samāḥ
Evam tvayi nānyathetosti na karma lipyate narē Īśāvāsyopaniṣad. 2.

5 Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam Gītā. II.50.

coin which answers the test in the mint passes outside the mint as a good coin the man tested and found fit in this mint of God, passes as good even in heaven. Passing through the world is a necessity for men. Just as an impure piece of gold becomes pure gold when it is heated, an imperfect man becomes perfect when he goes through the fire of trials. Unhappiness in this world is as much a necessity as happiness. The iron in man becomes steel, when heated in the fire of unhappiness and dipped in the cool water of happiness. Man thus becomes perfect. Here is what Śrī Basavēśvara says on the point:

> The Lord's mint, this world —
> whence you issue His impress borne,
> Shall find Heaven acknowledge His mould.
> If found wanting here below,
> likewise above, the reckoning show!
> Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

To become perfect and to attain *Jivanmukti*, liberation in this world itself, is very much better than liberation after one's death which is something like eating the sugarcane at its tasteless end. If you attain liberation in this world you have the company of other liberated men here. Mix with them and share the happiness in this world with them.

> I can't the halo of saints attain,
> holding Heaven and earth
> as not the same.
> To what you can compare
> but sav'ring the sapless end
> of sugarcane, —
> when to hold — only after
> life's spark's extinguished —
> union with the Lord
> can be established!
> O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

> Masters and servants! all
> who the Liṅga worship and adore;
> and invoke for worldly goods and store —
> Masters and servants! all
> who the *Liṅga's* powers avow
> imploring His favours to bestow.

Fear not!
For the earth is HIS.
Hence't is yours to share
all that therein is.
And this, I vouch
with all the Saints —
of Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

The earth is God's. All that is in it is His. So all His servants are to own it and share it with others. 'Enjoy it knowing that it is given by God to you and not as yours; hence covet not' — says Īśā Upaniṣat.[6] As Ravindranath Tagore states in his presidential address to the first *Indian Philosophical Congress* —

"Greed of acquistion and the living principle of creation are antagonistic to each other...... When the non-living elements of our surroundings are stupendously disproportionate, when they are mechanical systems and hoarded possessions, then the mutual discord between our life and our world ends in the defeat of the former. The gulf thus created by the receding stream of soul we try to replenish with a continuous shower of wealth which may have the power to fill but not the power to unite. Therefore the gap is dangerously concealed under the glittering quicksands of things which by their own accumulating weight cause a sudden subsidence, while we are in the depth of our sleep...... The Īśopaniṣad has strongly asserted that man must wish to live a hundred years and go on doing his work;"[7] for, according to it, the complete truth is in the harmony of the infinite and the finite, the passive ideal of perfection and the active process of its revealment; according to it, he who pursues the knowledge of infinite as an absolute truth sinks even into a deeper darkness than he who pursues the cult of the finite as complete in itself[8]... The regulated life is the rhythm of the finite through whose very restrictions pass to the immortal life. This amṛtam, the

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6 Tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasya sviddhanam Īśa-Up. 1

7 Same as foot-note 4

8 Andhaṁ tamaḥ praviśanti yē sambhūtimupāsate
Tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u sambhūtyām ratāḥ. Īśa-Up. 12

immortal life, is not a mere prolongation of physical existence, it is in the realisation of the perfect, it is in the well proportioned beautiful definition of life which every moment surpasses its own limits and expresses the Eternal. In the very first verse of the Īśā, the injunction is given to us; *Māgṛdhaḥ*: *Thou shalt not covet.*

It is therefore clear that one should avoid touching the property of others and that he should not even look at another man's wife. Śrī Basavēśvara declares:

> Here Ye, my brethren —
> The bathers in the brook!
> Ablution ne'er merits attain
> tho' water o'er you shall flow.
> If unforsaking ye retain
> thy greed for another's gain,
> and lust after another's wife,
> the stain shall all remain
> and the brook its babble
> shall still maintain —
> My Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

It is thus by leading an unselfish life in this world you should attain liberation here in this world alone. If you do not attain liberation in this world itself great is the perdition according to Kēna Upaniṣad[9] As stated by Aurobindo 'it is not by abandoning life on earth in order to pursue immortality on the more favourable planes of existence that the great achievement becomes possible. It is here '*Ihaiva*', in this mortal life and body that immortality must be won'. That is why Śrī Basavēśvara insists that one should get perfection in '*Iha-lōka*', this world, which is the work-shop of God to make man perfect.

Some think that 'Sanyāsa' means giving up every activity in the world. According to Bhagavadgītā a person who gives up the desire for the fruit of action is the real 'Sanyāsi' and not the person who gives up work of worldly nature or even work enjoined by the Vēdas.[10] It is not correct to say that knowledge alone leads to Mōkṣa,

9 Ihacedavedīdathasakyamasti na cedihāvedīnmahare vinaṣṭiḥ

10 Anāśritaḥ karmaphalam kāryam karmakarotiyaḥ

nor is it correct to say that Karma or work by itself leads to Mōkṣa. Good work without lnowledge of its nature is not sufficient to attain liberation for it is only when you know and act according to that knowledge that you get liberation.[11] In fact Īśā declares that knowledge without work leads to greater darkness than the darkness, your work without knowledge leads you to. So say what you know and do as you say.[12] If I do not act in accordance with what I say, God will not be with me. He resides where there is truth.

My utterance and my acts
    consort not.
For behold! My Lord,
    my heart is far from pure.
Thou dost dwell
    where word meets deed —
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

According to Muṇḍaka Upaniṣat, honesty is the best policy. It is *Satya* that succeeds and not *Anṛta*, satya is the wide road to salvation.[13] What is in accordance with the *Truth is* Satya. Ṛta is action in accordance with Satya. The Kēnōpaniṣad concludes by saying that austerity, restraint and dedicated work are the foundations of the Upaniṣadic wisdom that leads to salvation. The Vedas are its limbs and truth is its support.[14] Commenting on the last two verses Sri Aurobindo observes that the Upaniṣad closes with two verses which seem to review and characterise the whole work. Of all these qualifications which Kēnōpaniṣad purports to lay down, Satya is important. Act according to Satya — you will secure heaven on earth. Act according to Asatya you are in deadly hell on earth.

Hark! Heaven and earth,
each can other be.

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11 Vidyām cāvidyām ca yastad vedobhayam saha — Īśa-Up. 11
Avidyayā mṛtyum tīrtvā vidyayāmṛta maśnute

12 Andham tamaḥ praviśanti ye vidyāmupāsate — Īśa-Up. 9

13 Satyameva jayate nānṛtam satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ
Yenākramantṛyṣayo hyāptakāmāyatra tatsatyasya paramam nidhānam

14 Tasyrekapodamaḥ karmeti pratiṣṭhā vedāḥ sarvāṅgāni satyamāyatanaṁ

With truth on your lips,
you Heaven enjoy
with the false tongue
you unloose hell.
Heaven's e'er reward for righteousness;
hell is requital for evilness.
Thou the witness,
the KNOWER ALL —
My Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

Of the other requirements referred to in Kēnōpaniṣad, importance of Karma or dedicated work has already been dealt with. *Tapa* and *Dama* depend upon the control of the mind. If you connot control your eyes, it is better you are blind; if you cannot control your tongue, it is better you are dumb; if you cannot control your movements, it is better you are lame; if you cannot control yourself, you are doomed to damnation.

Meat and wine, feast the flesh;
lust of the eye, a lecher makes.
What profit tho'
a *Liṅga* one dons,
when thy life's linked not
with *Liṅga's* ways?
Jaṅgama's wrath invite they shall,
and escape n'er
their woeful end —
self-doomed to damnation —
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

Counter not anger with anger,
for what merit can it be?
Body flounced by fury,
frazzles human dignity.
Mind with anger aflame
speaks not understanding
e'en as fire in the hearth
enflames not the neighbours'
but brings ruin on thine own!
My Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

O Lord, My Father!
Make me lame
that my feet to stray unlured be.

Make me blind
that from passing scenes unsnared I be.
Make me deaf
that by vanity claimed not I be.
Fixed be my mind, but
to the feet of Thy saints, I pray,
My Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

If you lead a selfless life on earth according to Vedic injunctions treading the path of Satya protected by *Tapa* and *Dama*, you must be able to become a *Samadarśi* as contemplated in Īsōpaniṣad verse[15] and Bhagavadgītā verse 20 of Chapter 6.[16] You will see everyone in your self and your self in everyone. In other words you will be making no distinctions between men and women, between Dvijas and Śūdras, between well born and low born. As stated in verse 32 of Chapter 9 of Bhagavadgītā,[17] infact all such persons attain Mōkṣa if they surrender themselves to God. As declared by Śrī Basavēśvara:

On the same earth stands
the outcaste's hovel
and the deity's temple!
Whether for ritual or for rinsing
isn't the water, same?
To one who knows himself,
All castes coalesce as one,
even as salvation's sixfold path
leads but to the same end.
He that knows THEE verily
knows THEE but as ONE —
My Lord Kūḍala Sanṅgama.

How in contumely call
Siriyāḷa, a huckster
or Mācayya, a washerman?
How deride and designate

15 Yastu sarvāṇi bhūtāṇi ātmanyevānupaśyati
Sarvabhūteṣu cātmānam tato na vijugupaste — Īśa-Up. 6

16 Sarvabhūtasthamātmānam sarvabhūtāni cātmani
Īkṣate yogayuktātmā sarvatra samadarśanaḥ — Gītā VI. 29

17 Mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya e'pi syuḥ pāpayonayaḥ
Striyo vaiśyāstathā śūdrāste'pi yānti parām gatim — Gītā IX. 32

Kakkayya as cobbler,
Cennayya as outcaste,
and boast myself a Brāhmin?
Wouldn't I a laughing stock be,
with demeanour, so ludicrous
'fore my Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama?

The blacksmith in his smithy smelting,
The washerman washing clothes beating,
The weaver at his loom, labouring,
The Brāhmin at his *Vedas*, engaging.
All that's born unexcepting
claim not the ear for begetting.
None, but he to high-born conforms,
who the Divine intimation informs.
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

In the early days of Āryan civilization there were no caste distinctions. We find in Ṛgvēda ṛṣis of all castes. They were Kṣatriya ṛṣis like Kavasa, Vaisya ṛṣis like Vatasarpi and women ṛṣis like Apaṅga. We hear of a Kṣatriya like Viśvāmitra becoming a Brāhmin by his austerities (Tapasya). Caste distinctions were later innovation. Such a distinction was unjust and if smṛtis said that the tongue of a Sūdra should be cut if he pronounces Veda mantras and that molten lead should be poured into his ears in case he hears them and that he should be killed in case he remembers them.[18] Basavēśvara did well in ignoring such an unjust injunction.

It may be that the first Brāhmin was born out of the face of Brāhman, but the brāhmins born thereafter 'claim not the ear for begetting.' When Vedas and Bagavadgītā make no distinction between men and men, except in respect of their qualities of their head and heart, there is no reason for any one to make such distinctions. Here are few instances:

Was not Vyāsa, a fisherwoman's son?
and Mārkaṇḍeya of an outcaste?
and Manḍōdari, begotten of a frog?

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18 Śūdrasyavedaśravaṇe kacchotre taptamādarāt
Trapum prapūryedrājā taducchāraṇa mātrataḥ
Tajbihvām chedayoktūrṇam taddhāraṇavaśāttadā
Śarīrabhedanam kurvādvidhireṣomamucyate

Oh! Vain then to caste cling
as no one can tell
how your origins spring!
Your own Agastya was a fowler,
Durvāsa, a cobbler
and Kasyapa, a blacksmith!

A *Samadarśi* sees his self in all living beings. Kindness to animals as well as men is the basis of all religions.

What manner of faith that be
that enjoins not compassion?
To love all that breathes
by those that dwell on earth,
is ever HIS full satisfaction,
the Author of all being.

Killing in yajñas was ordained in Brāhmaṇās. Mīmāṁsakas believe in the efficacy of yajñas and in fact, they say, that the Veda-mantras are only intended for performance of yajñas and other similar karmas. Bhagavadgītā condemns these mīmāṁsakas as ignorant persons hankering after fruits of their Karmas[19]. Muṇḍakōpaniṣad compares those who rely on yajñas to cross the ocean of *Saṁsāra* as relying on broken boats.[20] Basavēśvara who was a Brāhmin by birth is said to have been proficient in Mīmāṁsa śāstras. He must have seen tears flowing out of goats that were being killed in yajñas in an inhuman manner and tears must have flowed from his own eyes. He cried:

O dear lamb!
Cry unto the Lord and lay
thy cause before Him.
In vain were thou slain
to flatt'ring unction claim,
this, thy slayers have done!
Make thy pleading known

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19 Yāmimāṁ puṣpitām vācam pravadantyavipaścitaḥ
Vedavādaratāḥ pārtha nānyadastīti vādinaḥ — Gītā, II. 42
Traiguṇya viṣaya vēdā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna — Ibid. 45

20 Plavā hyete adṛḍhā yajñarūpā aṣṭādaśoktamavaram yeṣu karma
Etacchreyo ēbhinandanti mūḍhā jarāmṛtyuṁ te punarevāpi yanti
—Muṇḍa-Up. I - 2.7

before those that propound
the *Vedas* and the *Śāstras.*
Thou shalt surely be avenged
by my Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

If Śrī Basavēśvara could be said to be not a believer in Vedas the same accusation has to be made in respect of Bhagavadgītā and Upaniṣads which give secondary importance to yajñas. Śrī Basavēśvara did not believe in rituals; he believed in the full self surrender of oneself to God. He cried:

Make me an Ekthar, Lord.
My chest —
a chamber for sound,
my head —
in hollow gourd's stead,
my nerves —
full streched as strings — that
my fingers may raise —
the two and thirty *ragas* —
in Thy praise
O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama!

Śrī Basavēśvara's conception of God is the same as found in Upaniṣads:[21]

I behold none but Thee
where'er I lift mine eyes.
Thou art the form
of the unbounded universe.
Thou its eye and
Thou its visage;
Thine its shoulders
and its feet —
O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama!
Stupendous as the universe,
dimension disdaining as the sky-spread,
vast as vastness art Thou.

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21 Sahasra śirṣrā puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasrapāt
Sa bhūmim viśvato vṛtvātyatiṣṭhaddaśāṅgulam Śvetāśvatara III.14
Agnirmūḍhā cakṣuṣī candrasūryau diśaḥ śrotre vāgvivṛtāśca vedāḥ
Vāyuḥ prāṇo hṛdayam viśvamasya padbhyām pṛthivīḥyeṣa sarvabhūtāntarātmā
Muṇdaka II.1-4

Firm Thy holy feet fixed
in fathomless depths beneath —
Beyond soaring skies
Thy sacred crown —
Thou art past understanding,
invisible, unimageable.
But lo! Thy spark supernal I hold
in the palm of my hand!

As is well known idol worship is not contemplated in Vedas. Kēnōpaniṣad[22] is stated to be condemning such a practice when it says that Parabrahman is what makes the eyes see and not what it sees and certainly not what people here worship. Śrī Basavēśvara was against worship in temples. He however felt the necessity of a shapeless symbol of Parabrahma for contemplation and concentration of mind in the course of Śivayōga. He did not believe in the intervention of a purōhita as a broker between the devotee and his God. He exclaimed;

What manner of man be he,
who bids another his proxy be —
"Feed thou for me and
my wife's bed share"!
Ill fares thy worship, conclude,
when body or heart
each the other exclude.
Of little worth is worship
except in unison
thy heart and mind attune.
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

Parabrahman is conceived in two ways. Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad puts it as *Murtha* and *Amurtha.*[23] The first one can be conceived in what is known as Savikalpa Samādhi, while the second is realised in what is known as Nirvikalpa Samādhi. In Savikalpa Samādhi, there is the feeling that 'I am one with God.' In Nirvikalpa Samādhi, there is a complete merger with the result that there

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22 Yaccakṣuṣā na paśyati yena cakṣūmṣi paśyati
tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupāsate Kena I - 6

23 Devāva bramhaṇorūpemūrtam caivāmūrtam

is no 'I' to conceive nor is there anything separate to be identified. It is the latter that, according to Śrī Allama Prabhu, may be said to exist without existing. It is compared to the smell of the sky flower. Parabrahman is such a condition as is beyond *Sat* and *Asat*; it breathes breathless by its own innate power (Śakti)[24]. Such a conception of Parabrahma you find in the very first vacana of Śrī Basavēśvara. Usually Parabrahman is said to exist like oil in sesame, butter in curds, smell in flower or sweetness in fruits;[25] that here oil, butter smell and sweetness clearly have existence though not apparent to the eyes. Love exists in woman, smell exists in flower, sweetness exists in fruits; but can it be said that love exists in a baby girl, that smell exists in a bud or that sweetness exists in a young plant before it yields fruits. The answer is yes and no; because they are not patent but latent. As Bhagavadgītā puts it,[26] something cannot come out of nothing. Similarly Parabrahman exists as if not existing when he is *Amurtha*, *Niṣkala* and *Nirguṇa*. There is one other example given in the vacana but the reading 'Udara' is correct and not 'Udaka' as the former goes with the word desire found in the vacana. It is only when the latent desire becomes patent that it becomes a burning problem. Any way the other examples are sufficient to convey beautifully the idea of Parabrahman in his *Amurtha* form.

As fulgent fire concealed in water
As sweet savour suffusing the plant —
As fragrance freed from the unfolding bud —
As Love's promise in the burgeoning maid —
— Thy essence
My Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.[27]

T. N. MALLAPPA

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24 Nāsadāsīnnosadāsīta tadānīm nānīdrajo novyoma paroyat......Namṛtyarāsīdamṛtam na tarhi narātryā anha asīt pratetaḥ. Ānīdavākam svadhayātadekaṁ tanmāddhā nyannaparaḥ kiñcanāsa-Ṛgvēda—svadhāyoti svasmindhīyatedriyata aśrityavartita itimāyā, tamā tadbramhekamavibhāgāpannamāsīt. Sāyaṇabhāṣya.

25 Tileṣu tailam dadhanīva sarpiḥ......Śvētāśvatara I.15

26 Nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ. Gītā - II 16

27. Note: The translations of vacanas are taken from "Thus Spake Basava"

Alas, my Lord,
why made you me —
this thing of nought,
a vain travailer here,
bereft of grace?
Have you no pity, Lord,
Alas, you have none!
Listen, then, and say,
were it not better done
a tree, a plant to create
than wretched me,
O Lord, Kuḍala Saṅgama!☿

☿ Musings of Basava—by S. S. Basavanal and K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, 1940

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA AND THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ

If the Vedas represent the earliest and best record of poetry, religion and philosophy produced by Indian genius, the *Bhagavadgītā* is by common consent its best summary in epic language. If a gap of one thousand years separates them and explains the development of a broad religious outlook in answer to the new challenges brought by time, a similar gap separates the Bhagavadgītā from Śrī Basavēśvara whose inspiring 'Vacanas', or musings, inspire us even today. At first sight, it might appear that the two are as much distant in teaching as in time. The two belong to diverse traditions, one Śaiva and the other Vaiṣṇava, held in popular imagination to be diametrically opposed to each other. But a study of the two texts will reveal how surprisingly alike are their teachings, how the same spirit inspires both and how an identical message of universal love and duty in the appointed task was proclaimed for the benefit of the common man. This is a modest attempt at indicating the essential agreement in fundamentals in the thoughts of the Gītā and Śrī Basavēśvara.

A survey of the conditions prevailing at the time when the Gītā was composed will show us how the fundamental harmony between thought and action or principle and practice, ritual and knowledge, or religion and philosophy, had disappeared in the life even of epic heroes who, by definition, represent ideal characters. The pristine spring of the eternal Vedas had almost dried up in the rising sands of cults and caste barriers. The spirit of universal religion and

philosophy was practically beyond the purview of the popular minds who were confined to conventional forms, ritual or conduct.

Indologists have shown by their researches how the rise of the Bhagavadgītā is due to the upsurge of a revaluation of the current values by a historical personality, Kṛṣṇa, with his new message of *Bhakti*, or devotion, to one Almighty God, a person who was deified later though he did not spare some of the blind rituals practised in the name of the Vedic scriptures. It is difficult to say that the doctrine of *Bhakti* or devotion to a personal god and the idea of *Niṣkāma-karma*, or disinterested action, are propounded for the first time in the *Gītā*. The word *bhakti* itself is traceable in the earlier *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad:*

Yasya dēve parā bhaktiḥ yathā dēve tathā gurau
Tasyaite kathitā hyarthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ.

'To him who has the highest devotion for God and for his spiritual teachers as for God, these matters declared here will become manifest if he be a great soul.[1] (*Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad VI*, 23). And the very initial verse of the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* speaks of the value of detachment in life.[2] Perhaps one might go a step backwards and see a sort of family resemblance between this *bhakti* and *Upāsanā* of the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads, the term Upāsanā including in a very significant way the system of sacrifices (*Karmakāṇḍa*) as much as the knowledge of the inner soul (*Jñānakāṇḍa*). Whatever these historical antecedents, the Vedic sacrifices as much as systems of Vedanta had both become more and more aristocratic, meaning little or nothing to the people at large in the process of their over-specialisation. Hence the need for a democratic, popular, practical guide-book in religion and philosophy which was ably fulfilled by the *Gītā*.

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1 This passage has been accepted to be the forerunner of the Gītā thought by experts like Oldenberg and Barnett.

Vide: i) Oldenberg, *Die lehre der Upanishaden*, p. 274.
ii) L. D. Barnett, *Transactions of III International Conference for the history of religions II*, p. 48.

2 Cf. "If only a man knows that all must be surrendered to the Lord, then the work done by him will not cling to him". Max Muller, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. I. p. 314.

By the twelfth century which saw the birth of Basavēśvara, the *Gītā* itself had fallen into the hands of the orthodox *ācāryas* and had suffered the same fate as that of the Vedas before the advent of the *Gītā*. Rival sects like Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism had developed in the spirit of mutual competition, decrying each other. The mass of the people were plunged in ignorance and superstition. The stories of rivalry among gods in the *purāṇas* only helped to destroy the first principles of divine grace and devotion to one God. Social life was rent asunder by prejudices due to castes and vocations. To iron out these differences — social, economic, political and religious — between people by an appeal to the inner spirit of true religion was a much needed task. And it was ably fulfilled in Karṇāṭak by Śrī Basavēśvara.

Lord Kṛṣṇa of the *Bhagavadgītā* is no founder of a new religion nor is there any proclamation on his part of a new found faith. What the *Gītā* does is to remove the dross accumulated over the true spirit of the Vedic religion by a fervent appeal to the heart, by a reassurance of one God Almighty who is ever open to devotion and by whose grace alone man can find peace here and now, whatever his station or vocation in life.

'He who loves me shall not be lost' (*na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*) is the ringing voice of the *Gītā*, and so too is Basava's. In fact, in the trinity of Vīraśaiva saints, Śrī Basavēśvara is invariably described as the embodiment of ideal bhakti[3]. Similarly, scholars like Charpentier have observed that the *Bhagavadgītā* is practically a *Bhakti-Upaniṣad*, verses from II.39 to XI.50 and chapters XII to XVIII, 73, forming one unit.[4] This *bhakti* of the *Bhagavadgītā* is quite distinct from the piety (*Śraddhā*) in performance of rituals.

A singular contribution of the *Gītā* is its synthesis of ascetic doctrine of salvation by knowledge and the sacrificial doctrine of

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3 cf. i. Bhaktisūtra Basavaṇṇaṅge, bhāvasūtra Cennabasavaṇṇaṅge, jñānasūtra Prabhudēvaṅge...... Mōḷige Mārayyana Vacanagaḷu (Belgaum, 1950) No. 275.

ii. Basavana billāḷāgi, hosa bhakti aṁbāgi, esedanayyā ā liṅgavanu gurimāḍi Cennabasavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu (Dharwar, 1965), No. 51.

4 Charpentier, *Some remarks on the Bhagavadgītā*, p. 12.

salvation by work in the higher synthesis of what the *Gītā* calls "Yoga". *Jñāna* by itself or *Karma* by itself is not enough. They must both be transformed into *Yoga*. This is a very untranslatable term which means much more in the *Gītā* than in the system of Patañjali. The *Gītā* understands by the term *Sāṅkhya*, the method of knowledge, and by the term *Karmayoga*, the method of work (II.23). It is aware that they are not opposed but complementary to each other. At the same time the *Gītā* emphasises the higher way, namely *bhakti*, or love for and trust in a personal deity (XI 33, XI 48, 53, XII 8, XVIII 62 - 66).

The *Gītā* condemns in no uncertain terms the austerity or worship which is practised to win welcome, honour and respect and with hypocrisy. (cf. XVII. 4-6). Such austerity with cruel intent is said to be *tāmasa* or darkish.

The true saving spirit is —

> Speech that gives no shock, true, pleasant, helpful; the practice of sacred recitation, these constitute austerity of speech. Serenity of mind, benignity, silence and self-restraint and purity of soul are called austerity of mind. (XVII 15 - 16).

As a corrolary of all this it follows that work is the means for one on the spiritual path while quietude is the nature of one who has reached the goal (VI. 3). The very final message of Lord Kṛśṇa is,

> Whatever work you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice or give, whatever be your austere practice, do all, O son of Kunti, as an offering to me (IX. 27). 'Even those who are born of the womb of sin, women, Vaiśyas and Śūdras too, if they resort to me they go on the highest way.' (IX. 32)

The *Gītā* urges no one to leave his worldly employment in order to practise piety. The doctrine of vocation (*Svadharma*) is a part of the poem. Where a man is placed, there he must do his duty:—

> Better a man's own duty, though ill done than another's duty well performed. (XVIII. 47).

Religion ceases to be a privilege of those who are rich or learned. In the arms of *bhakti* all are welcome, high and low alike. Morality itself becomes worship instead of an exercise. *Bhakti* ensures God's grace who is always close to man if only he should open his heart to

Him (*Gītā*, II.47, 71, III.30, IX.29, etc.). The Gītā idea of *Bhakti* is thus the higher *bhakti* distinguished from the lower *bhakti* popularised by Purāṇas and involving sensuality. While lower *bhakti* is more emotional, the higher *bhakti* is an end per se, tantamount to deliverance.

II

Against the background of fundamental teachings of the *Gītā* presented above, if one reads the *Vacanas* of Basava, one would be struck by the amount of correspondence in essentials. The castigation of mere ritualists as hollow worshippers is the same in both. In *vacana*[5] no. 545, Basava declares—

> You ceremonialists who indulge in empty polemics, you listen to me — first try to understand that even Viṣṇu according to your own accounts is caught in the cycle of re-birth unlike Śiva. Understand the spirit of your Vedic Mantras which mention the highest station of Viṣṇu ('Viṣṇōryatpuramaṁ padaṁ' and 'Atyatiṣṭhaddasāṅgulaṁ' etc.); Your ritual is far far away from that exalted state.

Both the *Gītā* and the *Vacanaśāstra* are unsparingly critical of scholastic discussions of the so called Paṇḍits. Both are interested in the awakening of the inner spirit. If the *Gītā* dismisses them as the 'Vedavāda', Basavēśvara too observes — (no. 745)

> "When the Mīmāṁsaka starts with the question 'What is the proof for the existence of God?', I shall cut the tip of his nose with the razor one is the God Almighty with eyes everywhere, with face everywhere, with arms everywhere etc., (*Viśvatscakṣu viśvato mukho......*). Next I shall rub it out with the brick of Vaiśeṣika logic and hold up to his face the mirror, namely, my Lord Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva."

Just as Lord Kṛṣṇa uses words like *Yoga* in his own special sense, so too does Basava use words like *bhakti* and *Sthala*. If once he admits the ascending order of Sthalas by stages from *bhakta* to *aikya* and *niravayava* (Appendix, no. 57), another time he denies the gradual nature of these levels of mystic experience as in *Vacana* no. 896. He

5 All *vacana* references are to Prof. S. S. Basavanal's revised edition, issued from Dharwar.

is ever interested in the spirit and ever opposed to the dead letter. Talking of *anubhāva*, or the mystic experience, Basava gives us metaphorical images —

> *Anubhāva* is a treasure hid underground. It is a veritable gem of the inner spirit. It is a dream dreamt by the babe etc., (Appendix No. 76).

It is this *anubhāva* which runs as the vital strength that relates and sublimates every means at the disposal of man —

> Without *anubhāva bhakti* is pointless. Without *anubhāva, liṅga* ceases to yield bliss. Without *anubhāva* again, *prasāda* is fruitless. (Appendix, No. 145.)

The words *Jñāna, Bhakti, Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Acāra, Sthala* are used in wide significances by Śrī Basavēśvara ranging from the finite to the ineffable infinite (cf. Appendix, Nos. 33, 104, 277 etc.). To one who is not a specialist, the precise rendering of these shades will go difficult.

But the importance assigned by Basavēśvara to right action and conduct, right thinking and right living in daily life—individual, social, political religious and spiritual — is unmistakable. In his own metaphorical language,

> How can the waves that rise in the vast and deep ocean appear outside the ocean? When they do appear, will the ocean ever blame itself? (Appendix, No. 32).

To the perfect soul according to Basava there is no second at all because in his universality he feels himself everywhere even like the ocean.

Knowledge is naturally reflected in action (Appendix, No. 3) and the cycle of *Saṁsāra* is one of God's making and redemption from it therefore is possible only by divine grace (Appendix, No. 7). All ideas of pride and prejudice that bind one to *saṁsāra* are, therefore, truly kept under restraint only by the balm of *bhakti* (cf. Nos. 888,894. etc.)

Among the far-flung *vacanas* of Basava which are addressed straight to the soul of men in the voice of a fellowbeing, unlike the Gītā where we have the voice of God incarnate, we have just selected the one ruling idea of *bhakti* which is Basavēśvara's positive

contribution to the history of Indian thought. In the words of his contemporary, Cannabasavaṇṇa, the position of Basavaṇṇa is positive, while that of Allama is negative.[6] It was Cannabasavaṇṇa who discharged the onerous task of substantiating Basavēśvara's philosophical stand with the authority of *āgamas* and he chooses in particular the texts —

1) *Bhakterasādhyaṁ na hi kiñcidāsti*
2) *Bhaktya sarvasiddhayaḥ siddhyanti* (no. 126, op. cit).
and 3) *śivabhaktisamāveśe na jātiparikalpanā* (No. 245).

Kallamaṭhada Prabhudēvaru who is a standing authority of the fifteenth century on the philosophy of Vīraśaivism quotes some texts which are very distinctive in raising the status of *bhakti* to heights unknown before.

1. *Dharmādi puruṣārthānāṁ caturṇām parataḥ parā*[7]
Pañcamaḥ puruṣārtho hī bhaktiḥ śaivī sanātāni.

'Bhakti is a fifth value of life. It is higher than the accepted four.'

2. *Na yogo na tapo nārcā kramaḥ ko'pi na vidyate*
Amāye śivamārge'smin bhaktirekā praśasyate.[8]

'In this Śaiva way without delusion', there is neither *yoga* nor *Tapas*, neither *Pūjā* nor aught else. *Bhakti* and *bhakti* alone stands supreme!

It follows as a corollary from this unique idea of *bhakti* that an active social life for the good of humanity at large is the very hallmark of a prefected soul. Here again, the close similarity between the *Gītā* idea of *Jīvanmuktas* like Janaka who work for the upkeep of the world (*lokasaṅgraha*) is unmistakable. In the same spirit that Kṛṣṇa threw open the gates of salvation to the high and the low, Basavēśvara went a step ahead in recognising saints among the lowest castes and professions.

In the breadth of outlook, in the spirit of tolerance, in the emphasis on positive service to society, in the denigration of petty

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6 cf. *Uṇṭeṁbuda basavaṇṇa koṇḍa*; *illeṁbudanallama koṇḍa* No. 503. (KUD.Edn.)

7 *Liṅgalīlāvilāsacāritra*, ed. Prof. S. S. Bhoosnurmath, Belgaum.
I am indebted to Prof. Bhoosnurmath for this reference and to Dr. R.C. Hiremath for the idea.

8 Ibid. XVI, 10.

dividing attitudes, in the reassurance of divine grace for a true soul in quest of peace, in an ethical philosophy harmonising all the best that was thought in this land, we find a great deal of similarity between Bhagavadgītā and Basavēśvara. The differences relate only to details and in view of the changed conditions of Indian society, Basavēśvara's contribution was very much needed. The language of the *Gītā* was Sanskrit and the thought fitted to an epic framework. This could not fire the spirit of the masses in the twelfth century. Basavēśvara used the language of the people with all the force of folk-idiom and all the graces of effective poetry to bring home to one and all the message he wanted to deliver. Herein lies Basava's greatness and his ever-lasting appeal to the Kannaḍa minds.

One modern iterpreter of Basavēśvara's thought has hazarded the hypothesis that Basavēśvara has an ironic fling at the *Bhagavadgītā* in *Vacana* no. 153. which says —

Gītava ballāta jāṇanalla, etc.

In the light of our study, such a conclusion cannot be justified. In fact, Kallamaṭhada Prabhudēvaru who has commented on this[9] very *vacana* sees no such ironic reference. He explains that what is referred to is the natural general meaning, namely, knowledge of music. We can conclude this article with the observation that in point of beauty, popularity and philosophic breadth, the *Bhagavadgītā* and *Basavēśvara-Vacana* stand on an equal footing.

K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

9 Liṅgalīlāvilāsacāritra X. 41 (p. 171).

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA AND HIS MODERN OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Basava, the central figure in the Vīraśaive movement of the twelfth century, was a towering and immortal personality. He was an inspiring religious leader, a mystic, a great social reformer, a rebel, a statesman and a literary man of remarkable abilities. It is no exaggeration to say that he stands peerless in the history of Karnāṭak either in the richness of his many-sided achievements or the lasting and abiding influence on society.

To me he is essentially a rebel — one who revolted against decadent tradition, which was the cradle of many evils — social, political, economic, religious, and literary. It is important that we have no contemporary biography of Basava. All the biographies of Basava belong to a later period, and hence these cannot be considered as providing authentic material from which could be pieced together a faithful account of his life.[1]

Basava was a Brahmin by birth, and even as a boy gave evidence of being endowed with an independent mind. He rebelled against blind ritualism which was repugnant to reason and, therefore, failed to evoke intellectual assent. It is not surprising that he refused to undergo *Upanayana* ceremony, (and became a Vīraśaiva).

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1 Harihara's *Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe* is the earliest and the best among these biographies. It is a pity that only about half of this work is available. The remaining portion is lost to us for ever.

(This event demonstrates his natural impulse to rebel against any thing that is reactionary or irrational in the traditional order). He felt that the old order was rotten to the core and the time was ripe for it to yield place to a new social order. He was no idle innovator. He aimed at introducing such reforms, which would vitalise society on truly humanistic principles. This was the mission of his life.

It is worth taking a brief look here at the religious conditions prevailing in Karnāṭak during the twelfth century. No assessment of his life and work would be adequate or proper without this background against which we will have to place Basava and his Vīraśaivism, so that both he and the revolution of which he is the symbol, become meaningful. There were at that time many minor tantric cults like the *Kaula*, the *Kāpālika*, the *Gāṇapatya* and the *Saura*. The followers of these cults were known to have indulged in gross acts like wine-drinking, flesh-eating and sexual laxity. These were practised in the name of religion. There were followers of Lakulīśa-Pāśupata sect, also known as *Kāḷāmukhas*, and this Śaiva sect was pretty popular. Some of the followers of this sect were no doubt great ascetics. But again, like all religions, this religion in course of time had lost sight of its original ideal and its observance become limited to such activities like temple-building and idol-worship. There was Buddhism but it was primarily a religion of the minorities. It was in fact *Vajrayānism*, a modified form of Buddhism, that was prevalent here. Jainism was still powerful and there are evidences to show that it was also gradually losing its hold on the masses. Vedic Brahmanism was however a very powerful influence. To the followers of this religion the doctrine of Karma claimed primacy even over that of *bhakti*. As a consequence therefore all the evil effects of the varṇāśrama-dharma, with the heirarchy of caste, making one superior to another, merely by accident of one's birth, became inevitable.

Thus we can safely assume that there were few religions in those days which could have appealed to the common man. The question of political unrest, social inequality, exploitation, religious apartheid, all these things taken together make us believe that the times were bad and that the situation warranted a religion which could clean

up the current consumptions and reorientate religion to satisfy the spiritual longings of the common man. Basava came up with such a religion and that was *Vīraśaivism.*

The first thing which Basava did was the popularization of his religion. His religion was no longer a religion of the selected few. Any person of any social status, occupation, or caste could embrace it. His religion was no respector of persons. The only qualification required for entering it was that one must become a sincere follower of Śiva, the one supreme God, and as a token of this, must wear *liṅga* on the body and smear *bhasma* on the forehead. To modern thinkers, familiar with all the religions as they are, it may possibly appear there was nothing essentially new in the tenets of his religion, but there was definitely a new note in how they were expressed and practised.

The 'Vacanas', literally mean spontaneous utterances which embody the gamut of the experiences of Basava and his followers. They were composed in simple, chaste, and spoken Kannaḍa and were easily understood by the masses. It was natural therefore a large number of people, touched by the sincerity of feelings expressed by the religious leaders, responded to its appeal. They came from all walks of life. They enjoyed perfect freedom of speech and thought in the new religion. Once a person became a Vīraśaiva, he was equal in all respects to every other Vīraśaiva. No barrier of caste or creed separated them. They had every right to express themselves in their mother tongue. Kannaḍa Language was enriched by the utterances of hundreds of vacanakāras, who, otherwise, left to themselves, might have chosen to remain silent. This ideal of the freedom of thought and the ideal of equality were not honoured as mere ideals. They were assiduously followed in practice. Basava was himself a model of all these ideals in his life. He was a highly placed official, a minister under king Bijjaḷa. But in private life he considered himself a 'servant of the servants of Śiva Śaraṇas'. Though he was the central figure in the Vīraśaiva movement, he was happy to consider himself the least among the followers of his religion. A good number of instances can be quoted wherein Basava was strongly

criticized for wrong actions and corrected by his followers who were pursuing lesser occupations.

Basava was both a man of this world as well as the other world. Nowhere in his utterances or in the compositions of his followers is renunciation of this world emphasised or even recommended. The goal of man is, of course, salvation — 'mokṣa'. But to attain mokṣa one need not have a cynical and sickly attitude to life here. "Live well here, live to the satisfaction of Śiva. You are like a ccin. The coin becomes fit for circulation outside when it gets the stamp of the mint. This world is God's mint. Be accepted here; you will then be accepted there, in the other world". This is the keynote of Vīraśaivism. Asceticism as understood by many religions was not encouraged. Nothing came in the way of a Vīraśaiva who wanted to lead a happy, pure, and dedicated life. Thus the life breath of Basava's social philosophy is 'activism' which preached dedicated hard work to make one's life happy and this world prosperous.

To be happy and self-dedicated one must profess an occupation which involves physical and mental labour. Religions often encourage laziness and parasitism in the name of asceticism. Basava strongly resented this. He proclaimed in unmistakable terms that Kāyaka was the surest path to salvation ("Kāyakave Kailāsa"). Kāyaka is not mere occupation, or mere physical labour. It denotes the profession of a person who consciously identifies his work as a part of his religious life. Kāyaka is dedicated work. Dedication is of two kinds — one is dedication to one's own profession; another is, dedication of the fruits of one's labour to the society. The instance of Mōḷigeya Mārayya, the wood-cutter, is a case in point. He would go daily to the fields, collect a faggot and sell it in the market. He would buy daily-rations out of the meagre sum earned in this way, and share his food with the *Jaṅgamas*. He never grumbled about his profession and his poverty. He was happily married and contented; he fervently believed that his Kāyaka would lead him to salvation. Once, Basava, out of pity for his poverty and in admiration for his dedicated life, attempted to offer him some money. Mārayya rejected it outright on the ground that his accepting the gift

would amount to theft as it was not earned by the sweat of his own labour.

Kāyaka has a note of dignity about it. A person may have undertaken the meanest of occupations. But if he is sincere and dedicated to his occupation, he is not inferior, in any sense, to a person who, by sheer accident, may have a more enviable occupation. This great ideal, again, was put into practice without any reservations. In the religious discussions that took place in Basava's place, the woodcutter, the washerman, the tailor, the shoemaker and the peasant sat side by side with the minister and the scholar, and freely participated in the proceedings. All this looks incredible, no doubt, and yet it is so modern in spirit and so true. This principle of equality of man was one of the greatest messages that Basava and his followers gave to Karnāṭak and to the world.

All religions prior to Basava had royal patronage and followers. But Basava did not aspire for such patronage. On the contrary, he had to work for society in the face of bitter opposition from royal circles. The inspiring force behind him was the common man. Basava, in this respect, was unquestionably a great leader. His was a dedication to the cause of the upliftment of the common man. He wanted to release him from the binding trammals of tradition and give him a hope of a better life. He preached to the masses in their own language and inculcated in them a great sense of self-respect, courage, equality, freedom and sacrifice. They understood him and followed him. When Basava revolted against Vedic Brahmanism in his youth, we can safely assume that there were then very few followers of Vīraśaivism. Basava's teachings had an unfailing mass appeal and conversion took place on a large scale. (It is pertinent to mention here that there are practically no evidences to say that there was religious persecution). Basava was able to give to the masses a new outlook on life. He brought about a thorough change or revolution in their ideas. For example, he declared that men are born equal and social inequality based on caste or creed was an unjust imposition. His followers accepted this noble idea. He was a great champion of the poor, the down-trodden and the untouchable. As

one story goes, he was questioned by Bijjaḷa for entering the house of an untouchable by name Kaṁbaḷi Nāgimayya and dining with him. He had arranged for a marriage alliance between a high-caste family and a low-caste family. By no means an easy proposition, though not impossible, even for a modern man of the twentieth century, Basava of the twelfth century, needless to say, must have faced tremendous opposition from the conservative groups of his times. As was suggested earlier, Basava was a born rebel and iconoclast and hence was able to accept the challenge thrown at him. It is very interesting to note that what Gandhiji did for Harijans in our day, Basava tried to do in his own capacity and within his own limitations eight hundred years ago and was successful to a very great extent during his life time.

Basava shunned publicity. When people around him praised him, he often requested them not to "drop him on the golden spike". He had no fascination for riches. He loved poor people and chose to be poor. What he earned by virtue of his being a minister, he spent to the last coin for the uplift of the poor people. The doors of his house were always kept open for those people. To him 'jaṅgamas' or the wandering, poor devotees were the real Gods by proxy. The worship of the jaṅgamas was to him, therefore, the real worship of Śiva. He compared them to the roots of the tree called God. "Water the roots", he says, "and the tree blossoms at the top". Hence, service to the poor was real worship. He has pleaded, in many of his utterances, not to save money for the future by hiding it under ground, but to spend it all for the poor and the deserving. In one of his utterances he has given expression to the vanities of the rich. "The rich man is like a man possessed; he is so insolent that he disdains to speak with others. His insolence will melt in a moment, as if by magic, when he is struck by poverty. Then only he will speak with others."

The services rendered by Basava to women in general are remarkable. It is well known that the orthodox Hindus believed that women, as a whole, were unfit to receive education, unfit to participate in serious discussions, and that no freedom should be

allowed to them. As a result, women's field of activities was restricted to their homes and, there too, they had no freedom for the development of personality. Basava felt that this was entirely unjust. He encouraged women to come out of the barriers which the tradition had built up, and to participate in the activities of the society. Here again Basava must have faced tremendous opposition from the conservative section of society. But his followers stoutly supported his cause for the emancipation of women. It was mostly because of him that we have a host of women writers who composed vacanas in their own language. They actively participated in the discussions that took place in Basava's house. We find some women living with perfect freedom and sharing the responsibilities of householders. It was for the first time in the history of Kannaḍa literature, that women took active interest in literary activities. Some of them were great mystics and had risen to a high order of spiritual consciousness. Some like Muktāyakka and Akkamahādēvi were able to meet great mystics like Allma on their own ground. This emancipation of woman is something very unique in the history of Karnāṭak.

Basava was a great idealist. At the same time he was a practical man too. He had the rare capacity of an excellent organiser, as otherwise we cannot explain as to how he was able to organize and build up a well-knit society. It is remarkable how he was able to bring about revolutionary change in the social set up of the people during the twelfth century.

His outlook on life was liberal, democratic and intensely humanitarian. He gave new values to the society and new dimensions to Kannaḍa literature. He taught people not to waste money over building temples, but to look within and find God enshrined within oneself. The *liṅga* which a Vīraśaiva wears on his body is nothing but a symbol of God within oneself. He also preached not to go on pilgrimages, but to feel the presence of God everywhere and that every spot is a holy place. Thus we see that there are many things which the modern man can appreciate and follow in the life and teachings of Basava.

M. CHIDANANDA MURTHY

If I was born,
'twas you, not I, who willed
the where and when;
if I should die,
'tis you, not I, should decide
the where and when;
and if I live,
'tis you, not I, who wills
how long and where.
Say then I'm yours,
entirely yours,
O Lord, Kuḍala Saṅgama!

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS OF KARNĀṬAK BEFORE BASAVA

An attempt is made here to delineate the social and religious conditions in Karnāṭak before the days of Basava. The emphasis is laid on such features as will help us to appreciate the rise of the great reformer who revived Vīraśaivism in the middle of the twelfth century.

The great rival of Vīraśaivism was Jainism which it overshadowed. The period of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa (8th to 12th centuries) was the heyday of this religion. Jainas made lasting contributions to education and learning, art and architecture, religion and philosophy. Their part in politics and administration was no less important. We may take the example of Attimabbe to know the part played by the Jainas in the life of Karnāṭak. There were two ministers under Cālukya Satyāśraya (A.D. 997—1008), one Mallapa and another Dhallapa. Mallapa had two daughters—Attimabbe and Guṇḍamabbe—and Dhallappa had one son, Nāgadēva, known for his bravery and character. Attimabbe and Guṇḍamabbe were both given in marriage to Nāgadvea, who died prematurely. Guṇḍamabbe declared that she would commit *sati*. Thereafter, Attimabbe decided to spend the rest of her life in carrying out religious and charitable works. She became so famous in these respects that she came to be known as *Jina dharma patāke*, or the righteous banner of Jainism, and *dānachintāmaṇi*, or the never-failing philanthropist. Her father had patronised poet Ponna who had the title of *Ubhayabhāṣāchakravarti* and had encouraged him to write *Śāntipurāṇa*. She had

one thousand copies of this work copied at her own expense and thus continued the good work begun by her father.[1] She also built *basadis*, or temples, and installed in them images of gold and jewels and for each of them she got made bells, golden lamps, splendid robes and rich triumphal arches. Finally, she built a *basadi* in Lokkiguṇḍi which was like the pinnacle, or *kaḷasa*, to the many *basadis* built by her earlier. The king Satyāśraya was so pleased with this work of charity that he donated a golden *kaḷasa* to it and made a grant of land for providing worship in it and for its maintenance.[2] Just as her father had encouraged Ponna to write *Śāntipurāṇa*, she encouraged Ranna to write *Ajitapurāṇa*. Thus, we owe to one family two great religious literary masterpieces in Kannaḍa and scores of works of art and architecture.

In the last days of the Cāḷukyas of Kalyāṇa, the Jains lost their position in society and adminstration which was taken by the Śaiva leaders many of whom belonged to the Pāśupata and Kāḷāmukha sects — precursors of the Vīraśaivas. Apart from the rivalry between the Jainas and Śaivite sects, Jainism was also weakened by the Cōḷa invasions, the fury of which was directed against their monuments.

Buddhism

Buddhism never occupied the same prominent place which Jainism did, in the history of Karṅāṭak. But it did occupy a much bigger place than is usually assumed. Aśōka was the first to introduce Buddhism into Karṇāṭak. Recently some *stupas* with Prākṛt inscriptions have been discovered in the Gulbarga district which show that Aśōka's missionary work had borne fruit. By the time of Hieun Tsang, there were one hundred Buddhist monasteries in the kingdom of the Cāḷukyas of Badāmi.[3] Some of these apparently continued to exist in parts of Karṇāṭak and others were built in course of time.

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1 Rice, JRAS, 1883, pp. 301-4.

2 SII, Vol. XI, Pt. I, p. 52.

3 Thomas Watters — *Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II, p. 239.

Comparisons have been made between the Buddha and Basava[4] on the basis of their teachings; but few people know that, in Basava's time and place, Buddhism was a living religion. Lōkāpur, near Mudhol, was built by one Lōkale, brother-in-law of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king, Kṛṣṇa Kandhara. It is described as a town which was resplendent with the temples of Hari, Hara, Jina and Buddha. An inscription of 1196 A.D. says that the Iṇḍi country in Bijapur district which is close to Basava's Bāgewāḍi, "was beautiful with the temples of Hari, Hara, gods, *Arhanta*, Buddha and the multitudes of sages, Jain *munis* and Buddhist monks."[5] Apart from this, there is a place called Bhairavāḍige in Bāgewāḍi Taluka itself. In 1191 A.D., it was known as Buddhavāḍige and it was a big enough town to be divided into western and apparently eastern wards.[6] Now, the name Bauddhavāḍige indicates that in 1191 A.D., the date of the record, it was a town of the Buddhists. At a later stage, it became Bhairavāḍige. References to Jaina and Śaiva defeating Buddhist scholars are to be found in records in Muḷagund in 1107 A.D.[7] and in Śravaṇabeḷgoḷa in the famous Mallisēṇa *Praśasti* of 1129 A.D.[8]

But the most important centre of Buddhists in mediaeval Karnāṭak and curiously enough also a place in which a great leader of Vīraśaivism, namely Allama Prabhu, flourished, was Belgame. In 1063 A.D.,[9] Daṇḍanāyaka Rūpabhaṭṭaya built a *vihāra* there

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4 The Buddha and Basava both fought against caste, idolatry, sacrificial rites, untouchability and inhuman treatment of women. Both preached their religion through the medium of the common man, one in Pāli and the other in Kannaḍa. Both gave freedom of thought, expression and action to the masses by liberating them from the shackles of superstition and ignorance. Both gave to the women-folk full rights in social and religious matters. Both founded fraternities open alike to the young and the old, to the touchable and the untouchable, to the rich and the poor, to the male and the female, to the wise and to the ignorant. — *Buddha and Basava*, by Kumaraswamiji of Navakalyāṇmath, Dharwar, 1957, p. 10.

5 INKK, No. 17. p. 147.
Harigṛhadiṁ Haragṛhadiṁ/Suragṛhadindaruhagṛhade Bauddhālayadiṁ gauravara savaṇara Bauddhara neravigaḷindiṇḍi nāḍe sogayisitōrkuṁ

6 *BK*, No. 1 of 1930-31.

7 *SII*, Vol. XI, Pt. I, p. 157.

8 *EI*, Vol. III, p. 184.

9 *EC*, Vol. II, SK, 171.

named Jayantipura-Buddha-Vihāra and made grants for it and for the worship of Tārā Bhagavati and of the gods Kēśava, Lokēśvara and Buddha and with all their attendant gods. He also made grants for the distribution of food to the *yoginis*, *Kusalis* and *Sanyāsins*. Buddhism therefore survived very late in Belgame. The site of this *vihāra* is still known and Rice found there the image of Tārā Bhagavati which had been set up there in 1067,[10] by one Sāvāsi Nāgiyakka. The record, which mentions the installation of Tārā Bhagawati, also gives us the name of a Buddhist teacher... Prabha Bauddha Bhalāra. It is tempting to think that Prabhudēva who hailed from this place was influenced by Buddhism, many features of which are common with Vīraśaivism. Basava also may have had a similar experience as he lived close to the Iṇḍi country and Baudhavādige, where Buddhism flourished in his days.

Another centre of Buddhist in Karnāṭak was Daṁbaḷ.[11] In a record of 1045 - 46, there is a mention of a Bauddha *vihāra* constructed by the sixteen *śeṭṭis* of the place, and another *vihāra* of Tārādēvi which had been built at the same place by one Seṭṭi Samgavayya of Lokkiguṇḍi. Buddhism continued to be prevalent in Daṁbaḷ at least up to 1129, when we are told that the scholars of that place were learned in its doctrines.[12]

The *Nāth Pantha* which was once prevalent in South Kanara, as evidenced by the temple at Kadire, in Mangalore, is taken by some to have been a branch of Vajrayāna of the Mahāyāna sect of Buddhism,[13] and by others as a branch of Śaivism which was influenced by Buddhism[14]. In either case, the influence of Buddhism in the Kadire temple has not been disputed.

Since the tenth century, Buddhism had to some extent fallen low in the estimation of the people. "There was considerable laxity in matters of food and drink and charges of soft living were in fact on

10 *EC*, Vol. VII, SK, 169.
11 *IA*, Vol. X, p. 185.
12 *Ibid.*, No. 175.
13 M. Govinda Pai in *Teṅkanāḍu*, p. 46.
14 K. V. Ramesh: *History of South Kanara* (Thesis under print).

occasions levelled against them."[15] But there is room to suspect that the life and teachings of the Buddha may have inspired Vīraśaivism, in parts, in spite of the decline of some of its followers.

The Kāḷāmukhas

While the Jainas were the rivals, the Buddhists, at any rate, the Buddha, a probable model, the Kāḷāmukhas were much more intimately connected with the Vīraśaivas, though the degree of their relationship is still a matter for investigation.[16] They were Pāśupatas and are often described as exponents of the Lākuḷa creed; and sometimes a teacher (of theirs) is compared to Lākuḷīśvara, the founder of the system or styled as Lākuḷīśvara Paṇḍita.[17] Some of them came to Karnāṭak, according to their own records, from Kashmir. Others might have come from other parts of North India also and much earlier than the early part of the ninth century which is supposed to be the date of their first record in Karnāṭak.[18] A Paṭṭadakal record of 755 A.D. refers to an *Ācārya* named Jñānaśiva who had come to that place from Mrigathanikāhāravishaya on the north bank of the Ganges and who was honoured by the Cālukya queen Trailōkya Mahādēvi. Since Jñānaśiva is a name common to the Kāḷāmukhas, he might be the first among the Kāḷāmukhas, or followers of the Lākuḷaśaiva cult, to come to Karnāṭak.

The ninth and tenth centuries were apparently the period when the Pāśupata-Kāḷāmukha sect was very slowly coming into prominence. Therefore, their records of this period are few. But in the beignning of the eleventh century, it gained the support of the ruling dynasty. Suggalādēvi, queen of Jayasimha II, in 1029 A.D., gave certain lands to Brahmarāsi Paṇḍita of the Pāśupata school for worship and offerings to god Mārasiṅghēśvara of Dēvapur and also

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15 Handiqui: p. 373.

16 Malliśēṇa Praśasti, v. 26, speaks apart from Jainas, of Śaivas, Pāśupatas, Buddhists, Kāpālikas and Kapilas as prominent sects and Cennabasavēśvara in Karaṇa Hasuge speaks of Śaivas, Pāsupatas, Kāḷāmukhas, Kaula, etc.

17 Handiqui, p. 509.

18 Nandi Plates of Rāṣtrakūṭas Govinda III of 807 A.D. quoted in *QJMS*, Vol. VII, p. 177.

for maintaining ascetics and students there. So much for the queen's support of the Pāśupata sect and now for the king's. In 1036 A.D., Jayasiṁha II made certain grants of land for the repairs of the temple of Pañchaliṅga which was the *Kāḷāmukhi Brahmacāri-sthāna* of Baḷḷigāve, or the centre in Belgame, which trained the Kāḷāmukha ascetic students. The grant was made to the celebrated Lakuḷīśvara Paṇḍita, who was living there.[19] Lakuḷīsa is said in this record to have been "a master of logic and all other sciences; a lion in tearing his opponents to pieces, the uprooter of the doctrine of the Bauddhas, Mīmāmsakas, Lōkāyatas, Sāṅkhyas, Digaṁbaras and Advaitins, the vanquisher of Akalaṅka, Abhayacandra, Vādibha-siṁha, Vādirāja and Nayavādin; the sole supporter of the Naiyāyikas, a river in flood in the uninterrupted flow of his speech; and fond of explaining things." He must evidently have been a very learned scholar and it was no doubt that his fame made the Cālukya emperor make a gift of lands to a temple under his control which was also the most important centre of religious education of the Kāḷāmukhas[20]. One of the Jaina scholars whom this scholar Lakulīśa is supposed to have defeated is Vādirāja. The Mallisēna Praśasti of 1129 A.D. says that this Vādirāja carried on religious debates in the court of Jayasiṁha II. That record evidently claims the credit for the success in them to Vādirāja, for it says, "In the victorious capital of the glorious Cālukya emperor, the birth-place of the goddess of speech, the sharp sounding drum of the victorious Vādirāja roams about."[21]

According to the tradition contained in *Basava Purāṇa*, *Cannabasava* Purāṇa, etc. Jēḍara Dāsimayya, one of the earliest writers of *Vacanas*, is said to have been the *guru* of Suggalādēvi and to have disputed in the king's court with the Jainas and to have converted the king to Vīraśaivism.[22] Since all the religious sects claim success in the

19 *SII*, Vol. XX, No. 23, p. 24.

20 *EC*, Vol. VII, SK No. 126.

21 V. 42 of Malliśēṇa Praśasti.

22 If the term *liṅgi* refers to Liṅgāyats, we have them mentioned in a record from Bijapur of 1040 A. D. which speaks of *liṅgis* along with the Brahmins and in the same terms of very high regard. But traditioh has more to say about pre-Basava Liṅgāyats than inscriptions.

court of Jayasiṁha II, it is difficult to say whose claim can be sustained. But there is no doubt at all that both Jayasiṁha and Suggalādēvi took keen interest in religious discussions held in their court and their encouragement of the different religions was so sincere that each one believed that it had succeeded in its mission of winning the king and queen to its side.

However, in the 11th and 12th centuries, the Kāḷāmukhas were in a flourishing condition. They were in charge of many *mathas* and temples which received donations from one and all. They were known as *Rājagurus*. They were well established in Belgame where they held the headships of Pañchaliṅga, Dakṣiṇa Kēdārēśvara, Hariharāditya and various other temples and *mathas*. Kuppotur, close by, was another of their centres. The Kōtīśvara temple,[23] in that town, was under their charge and the head of this temple was also the head of 77 other temples. A few of these were in Muḷgund, Hāngal, Abbalūru, Devangeri, Kiruvāḍe and Kabbinasirivūru. In Muḷgund, there was a temple of God, Sōbhanēśvaradēva. In 1105 A.D., there was a Śaiva teacher, a *Rājaguru* (at this time all *Rājagurus* were invariably Kāḷāmukhas). He was in charge of many other śaiva temples in the seven and half lakh country, *viz.*, the whole of the Kannaḍa country.[24] From other sources, we learn that the *Kāḷāmukhas* were in charge of temples and *mathas* in Gadag, Vijayapur, Iṅgaḷēśvar, Muttagi and Bāgewāḍi in north Karnāṭak and what are now Hāsan, Kaḍūr and Citradurga districts and accordingly in Mysore, Bangalore and Tumkur districts. They were also to be found in parts of Tamiḷnād and Āndhra.

Many of these temples and *mathas* especially in Northern Karnāṭak and elsewhere appear to have been taken over by the Vīraśaivas. The most famous temple and *matha* in Baḷḷigāve was the Dakṣiṇa-Kēdarēśvara, which was under the Kāḷāmukhas. The Southern or Dakṣiṅa Kēdārēśvara is named after the famous Kēdārēṣvara of the North. The Northern Kēdārēśvara must have

23 *EC*, Vol. VIII, Sb. No. 276.
24 *SII*, Vol. XI, Pt. I, p. 156.

been a Kāḷāmukha centre then to have inspired the Kāḷāmukhas in the South to have a Southern Kēdārēśvara. Now, the chief priest of Kēdāranath, is always of the Jaṅgama caste from Mysore.[25] A branch of the Kāḷāmukhas in Karnāṭak describe themselves as belonging to *Parvatāvaḷi* or *Parvatānvaya*. As Rice[26] has correctly pointed out, *Parvata* here is Śrī Parvata or Śrī Śaila. This famous Śaiva centre appears to have been the headquarters of Kāḷāmukhas of the South, and Cālukya kings who were their supporters, visited this centre of pilgrimage quite often. The important temple in this place, the Mallikārjuna, is under the control of the Vīraśaivas and Śrī Śaila had, and continues to have, as great a significance for them as it had for the Kāḷāmukhas. Dr. Nandimath has pointed out that the *matha* at Hūli which was earlier under the Kāḷāmukhas is now a Vīraśaiva institution. Other such examples can be pointed out. The old Siddhēśvara temple of Bijapur, in which resided Yōgīśvara Paṇḍita, a Kāḷāmukha teacher is another such example. We, nowhere, hear of clashes between the Kāḷāmukhas and the Vīraśaivas as we hear between the Jainas and the Vīraśaivas.

Kāḷāmukhas, Pāśupatas and Kāpālikas

As has been seen earlier, the Kāḷāmukha-Pāśupata teachers were usually very learned and for centuries received the respect and adoration from the princes and the people alike. It is impossible to couple them with the Kāpālikas as has been done by Dr. R. C. Majumdar in this regard.[27] The mistake appears to have arisen on account of a few of the Kāḷāmukhas adopting the Kāpālika way of life and bringing a bad name to the community as a whole. Another cause of confusion was that both the Kāpālikas and the Kāḷāmukhas had similar names. But their teachers, respected and patronised by kings, and put in charge of monastic establishments, could hardly be supposed to have belonged to a sect akin to Kāpālikas merely on account of the similarity of names.[28]

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25 *IG*, Vol. VIII, p. 109.
26 *EC*, Vol. VII, p. 22.
27 Struggle for Empire p. 458.
28 Handiqui, p. 510.

Other Cults

The Śākta cult was closely allied to that of the Pāśupatas. It consisted in the worship of Mahālakṣmi and other goddesses. The priests in such temples were Pāśupatas. Savadatti, Tuḷjāpura, Śākaṁbhari and Gōkarna were some of the Śākta centres.

The cult of the Kārtikēya flourished in the Bellary district. One Gadādhara of Varēndri (East Bengal) founded a *matha* at Koḷagallu near Bellary, set up there images of a number of gods including that of Kārtikēya. He also set up an image of Kārtikēya in Kuḍitani, a few miles away from Koḷagallu. Both these places are referred to as Kārtikēya *tapōvana*. Probably, they were two branches of a common establishment which was established in 976 A.D. just before the rise of the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa and flourished through out their period and spread its influence into the neighbouring districts.[29]

Vaiṣṇavism seems to have been a secondary cult, if temples built in a period, are taken into account, to find out the popularity of a religion. In the Deccan and Karnāṭak, for five centuries, the Vaiṣṇavas have nothing to show in comparison with Virūpākṣa at Paṭṭadakal, the Kailāsa at Ellora or Mahādēva at Iṭṭagi, till we come to the temples in Bēlūr in the 12th century A.D.

Social Life

The temples and the *mathas*, which were attached to them, form a convenient transition from religious to social conditions of the times. Because, these institutions served both religious as well as social purposes. Among the social services rendered by the Kāḷāmukha temples and *mathas*, which alone predominated in the pre-Basava period, we may confine our attention to the educational activities in them. The Kāḷāmukhas were known as "the beginning of the rainy season (in satisfying the thirst) to the *chātaka* birds, their disciples," and thereby seems to imply that they were great educationists. Some of them are also called *Rājagurus*. By means of their learning and educational activities, they made Baḷḷigāve a

29 *SII*, Vol. IX, Pt. I, pp. 75, 164, 197 and 254.

great centre of learning in the twelfth century. And of the institutions which they built there, none was more famous than the *matha* attached to the temple of Kēdārēśvara, popularly known as *Kōḍīya matha*. This *maṭha* (1) afforded opportunities for the worship of Śivaliṅga; (2) had some quarters attached to it in which Śaiva ascetics could live and pursue their religious observances; (3) had a hospital in which all diseased persons were treated; (4) distributed food free to all who asked for it and (5) gave instruction in many branches of learning to students.[30] We are here concerned only with the last. And this service of giving instruction in many branches of learning it carried out very well because it was presided over from time to time by very eminent scholars. And one of the greatest of them was Vāmaśakti II. He was "always surrounded by a troop of *Brahmacārin* disciples," because he was "a walking *Kalpa* tree causing pleasure" (by fulfilling their desires) to poets, declaimers, orators, conversationalists and other kinds of learned men." He was "the one object in which centre all the thoughts and aspirations of his pupils" and "a mine of light for illuminating the truth." He was far superior to others in learning and this superiority is explained thus by the record: "One man first makes or discovers a science; another gives shape to it by clothing the thoughts in appropriate words; while another develops the science (this is the rule; but) marvellous to relate, the guru Vāmaśakti himself does all the above things and even occupies himself in teaching the science to those who are ignorant of it"[31] This Vāmaśakti flourished in Baḷḷigāve in the second half of the twelfth century. *Kōḍīya-maṭha* was not the only educational institution in Baḷḷigāve. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Baḷḷigāve "was the seat of many educational institutions — *maṭhas*, temples and *Brahmapuris*, where instruction could be had in all subjects of human knowledge by students of all creeds — Brahmanical, Jaina and Buddhist. It thus enjoyed a deservedly high reputation as a centre of learning and no doubt must have been entrusted with the education

30 *EC*, Vol. VII, SK, No. 102.
31 *EC*, Vol. VII, Sk. No. 105.

of the sons of many high officers." That is why two governors (*Mahāmaṇḍalēśvaras*) refer to *Kōḍiya maṭha* by saying "this is our hereditary *gurukula*. (This is the place where we have been educated from generation to generation)." "All these facts — namely the existence of many educational institutions — Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina — the high standard of scholarship of the heads of these institutions and the fact that the scions of many noble families were sent there to be educated, contributed to the greatness of the reputation of Belgame." It was from such a place, probably the highest place of learning of the times in Karnāṭak, that Prabhudēva "who became the president of the assembly established by Basava to discuss the doctrines of Vīraśaivism" hailed. His *guru* Animiṣa Śivayogi is said to have lived in Animiṣa Koppa, close to Belgame. His disciple, the great Mahādēviyakka also hailed from Uḍutaḍi of this area.

Turning to the region, in which Basava spent his childhood and youth, we find that the foremost educational centre in the northern parts of Bijapur district was Saloṭgi. Here in 945 A.D. Nārāyaṇa, the chief minister of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇarāja, established a centre of higher learning, "magnificent in its splendour, and handsome," and endowed it on a lavish scale. It attracted the attention of the scholars from other parts of India. The record proudly says, "Here, there are scholars, born in various lands." We definitely know that there was an *Āndhradaṇḍa* (Āndhra group). This town Pāviṭṭage became so famous for its *Śāla* that it came to be known as Pāviṭṭage with the *Sāla* and the present name is a compound of these two words —*Sāla* + Pāviṭṭage → Sāla-hoṭgi → Sāloṭagi. It flourished throughout the Cālukya, Yādava periods and even later.

Another centre of education then was Vijayāpura, modern Bijapur. It was known as a *Rājadhāni* (Capital) as well as Southern Vāraṇāsi (*Dakṣiṇa* Vāraṇāsi). About 1000 A.D. a great logician and saint known as Kāśmiramuni came to Tardavāḍi (the old name for the region of Bijapur) from Kashmir. His coming to this area, according to this record, was as if "Vāṇi" (or goddess of learning) came from Kashmir to Tardavāḍi. In the line of teachers of Kasmiramuni, after about half a century, came Yōgīśvara, "whose

speech was of perfect quality and who was kindly disposed towards learned men and who himself delighted in all learning and who was endowed with the exceeding greatness of being free from envy and who was pure in his actions." He received a big donation of nearly 300 *mattars* land for carrying on the worship and for conducting a school in the Siddhēśvara temple, in 1074 A.D.[32] Considering the size of the land-grant, the school must have been a prosperous one. His successor was Lakuḷīśvaradēva. "People on earth lovingly praise him as omniscient, learned in Śivatatva, one following the path laid down by Manu, one by whose conduct the whole of the earth became pure... the moon to the ocean of nectar that was *Lākulāgama*."[33] Muttagi was another centre of education closely connected with Bijapur. In the beginning of the eleventh century an *agrahāra* had been established here by Viṣṇubhaṭṭa who was "full of knowledge and known as the store of learning." In that *agrahāra*, General Govinda built the temple of Rāmēśvara and for worship in that temple, for the food and clothing of sages, students and scholars and for the repair of temple and *matha*, Yōgēśvara of Vijayapura, the founder of the school in Siddhēśvara temple there received 30 *mattars* of land.

Another well-known educational institution, in the same region, was Kaḍlewāḍa, which was a *ghaṭika-sthāna*, that is, a centre of higher learning.[34] Bāgewāḍi, the birth-place of Basava, was a crest-jewel among *agrahāras*, or centres of learned men, known for their erudition.[35] These scholars in Bāgewāḍi were 500 in number. A record, of the time of Sōmēśvara I, says that his senior queen Maiḷaldēvi, in his presence, gave a land-gift to Jñānarāsi Vyākhyānadēva, of the Pāśupata school, for worship in the temple of Sōmēśvara and the gift was entrusted to the care of the *mahājanas* of Bāgewāḍi. The existence of the Pāśupata school, a century before Basava, in his

32 *IA*, X, p. 130.
33 *INKK*, No. 8.
34 *Lokavikhyātavāgirda Ghaṭikā sthānam. SII*, Vol. XX, p. 19.
35 *SII*, Vol. XV, No. 113, p. 144.

native place is significant. Kūḍala-Saṅgama or Saṅgama, with its temple of Saṅgamēśvara, is mentioned in Bhāvagandhavāraṇa's inscription of the time of Sōmēśvara I (1042-1068). Saṅgama was a *Sarvanamasyada agrahāra* and "primeval *Brahmapuri* of the emperors." And the *mahājanas* of that *agrahāra* were devotees of god Saṅgamēśvara and reputed for their scholarship. It was in such an educational centre that Basava studied for 12 years. Apart from the temple of Saṅgamēśvara, there were in Saṅgama, temples for the gods Kāḷēśvara and Āchēśvara on the Malāpahāri. Iṅgaḷēśvara and Maṇigavaḷḷi (Managōḷi) were other well-known *agrahāras* in the same region. We have confined ourselves to the area, in which Basava grew up, to emphasize the fact that he did so in an area where there were a number of centres of higher education in which Brahmins known for their learning and discipline lived. The records do not speak of either the earlier stages of education except for stray references to '*bāla-sikṣe*', or of other communities, except the ruling class. But we do know that since the days of Kauṭilya the ruling classes had had a system of training which continued up to the days of the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa and later; so also the trading classes had a system of education which fitted them for their calling. It is too much to expect mass education at that time. It is an entirely modern concept. But the temple and its services fulfilled this need to some extent.

Though India was not behind any other country in the spread of education, still there were defects in its system. By and large, the class in which higher education was concentrated was an admirable class, still a small minority of these, either fell from the high ideals such as that of celibacy or adopted questionable practices such as those of the Kāpālikas, so that they earned a bad name for the whole class. The Kāḷāmukhas turned the current of religion from ritualism and devotion to logic and speculation. This in turn led to controversies among the conflicting schools of philosophy. The old path of toleration and co-operation was given up and that of bigotry and rivalry took its place. *Tarka*, or logic, became the fashion and it was logic for its own sake. Bred in such an atmosphere of controversy

and acrimonious wrangling in religious matters, it was little wonder that the discord and dissension extended to political affairs and provoked that disunion which left the country an easy prey to foreign invaders.[36]

In the temples which were also centres of education was the system of *Dēvadāsi*, or public women, attached to the temples. It was considered "a source of merit" to build quarters for them. Literature has many descriptions of the quarters wherein such women lived. Their main occupation was to dance in temples as part of the worship and for this they received grants of land from philanthropists. One or two examples will make the system clear to modern readers. In 1112 A.D., *Daṇḍanāyaka* Anantamayya made a gift for the maintenance of the quarter for dancing girls constructed by him and attached to the temple of Sōmēśvaradēva. It was hoped that "this work of dharma" would be looked after by the town authorities as their own work of merit.[37] Another example of about the same time was the following. Mahādēva, a general of Vikramāditya, built at Iṭṭagi the exquisite temple of Mahādēva. He also built a residence of public women, which was added to the temple of Caṇḍēśvara and a *matha* which was also a Vedic school.[38] It is usual to think that Brahmins who were in charge of the temples, as having been responsible for this degrading practice of *Dēvadāsis*. But Albiruni is clear that it was the kings who maintained this institution. And they did so for the benefit of their revenues, in the face of the opposition of the Brahmin priests. But for the kings, he says, no Brahmin or priest would allow in their temples women who sing, dance and play. "The kings, however, make them a source of attraction to their subjects so that they may meet the expenditure of their armies out of the revenues derived from them.[39] And even the noble and religious Attimabbe who constructed the *Basadi* in Lokkiguṇḍi made provision

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36 S. V. Venkatesvara: *Indian Culture Through the Ages*, I, pp. 268-9.
37 *SII*, Vol. XX, No. 74, p. 89.
38 *EI*, Vol. XIII, 41.
39 A. S. Altekar,: *Rāṣṭrakūṭas*, p. 295-6.

for the *sūḷe*, or public woman, connected with the worship.[40] The decline in social and religious standards was not confined to Karnāṭak. "About this time, all over India there was a general intellectual and cultural decline. How far the two phenomena reacted upon one another it is not easy to determine. But whatever may be the cause and the reaction, the most regrettable feature was the degradation in the ideals of decency and sexual morality, brought about by religious practices."[41] The greatness of Basava and his followers consists in the fact that they made one of the earliest and most successful attempts to rescue the country from this degradation.

Transition to Vīraśaivism

The Jainas had criticised some of the religious practices of the Hindus. But they themselves had succumbed to quite a few of them. Some of the Śaiva leaders and *Vacanakāras* inveighed against the social evils, for example, Jēḍara Dāsimayya, who was influential in the court of Jayasiṁha II, a century before Basava, had pointed the way to other reformers. He was followed by a number of others. But all this was a trickle; it was in the age of Basava that the flood of reformers swept over Karnāṭak. Many of the leaders who had followed the system which Basava was criticising came over to his side. One example is that of *Daṇḍanāyaka* Kēśimayya. He supported the Kāḷāmukhas earlier, but, after Basava's days, appears to have become a Vīraśaiva himself. He was governor of Banavāsi under Bijjaḷa in 1159 A.D. He built a temple for god Kēśava in Baḷḷigāve (Belgame) and constructed a beautiful *Brahmapuri* (quarters for the learned *Brāhmaṇas*) and called it Kēśavapuri and appointed as its superintendent his *ārādhya*, the *rājaguru* Vāmaśakti, "an ornament of Lākuḷāgama," who was the head of the *Dakṣiṇa Kēdārasthāna*, whom we have met earlier as an example of a great teacher. Such a great supporter of the Kāḷāmukhas in 1159 A.D., became a supporter of the revived Vīraśaiva sect as is evidenced by his setting up the Abbalūr inscription glorifying Ekāntada Rāmayya's services in

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40 *SII*, Vol. XI, Pt. p. 52.

41 *Struggle for Empire*, p. 400.

defeating the Jainas and also from the fact that he is praised by Harihara and Rāghavāṅka. His career explains the smooth transition from the Kāḷāmukhas to the Vīraśaivas in the social and religious life of Karnāṭak.[42]

G. S. DIKSHIT

42 The *Ārādhya* Brahmins who are regarded as semi-Liṅgāyats may have been in the intermediate stage in the transition from the Kāḷāmukhas to the Vīraśaivas in mediaeval Karnāṭak.

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA : A SOCIAL REFORMER

The function of a revolution is to break up tradition. Society, before the time of Śrī Basavēśvara, was a victim of lifeless tradition. Plunged in deep darkness, it was unable to shape its own future. The religions which were then in practice had swerved away from their true paths and had lost sight of their real object. The Jaina religion which preached the supremacy of non-violence was, in actuality, sustained by force. Buddhism was mainly centred round individual personalities. The Vedic religion, with its stress on the rigours of *Karma*, had brought nothing but disillusionment to the people. The superstition that salvation could be achieved only through the laceration of the body and through self-inflicted pain still held the society in its grip. Fraud, Injustice and Exploitation ruled society in the name of religion and under the mask of *Karma*. Religions which were born to save men threatened to destroy them. The seeds of fear were sown everywhere by the forces of political anarchy. Society, as a result, failed miserably to meet the needs and aspirations of the common people.

It was at this critical juncture that Śrī Basavēśvara was born. The degeneration of society deeply moved him and he saw clearly that only a religion that could bring about the integration of thought and action could preserve mankind. Śrī Basavēśvara boldly declared that happiness here and hereafter could come only through the practice of *Śaraṇa dharma*, with its profound social orientation. A society can progress in all directions only if the moral level of the

people is kept high. Immoral practices in the name of religion are detrimental to the well-being of the individual as well as of the society. None knew this better than Śrī Basavēśvara who spoke constantly on the necessity of each individual adhering to the path of the good. Words are not enough, he said, they must be translated into action. There would be no re-birth for the individual, he declared, if during his earthly life he can achieve the full integration of thought and action. He taught what he himself practised, and his words were the fruits of his own actions. His life was an example and a model to millions.

Social ethics condemns ill conduct, evil habits and immoral dealings. A major function of religion is to secure the well-being of society, to make the individual realise that the happiness of others is as important as that of his own. A community lives in peace, only when the individual desires the happiness of his neighbours as well as of his own. Those who had preached in the past the well-being of all had themselves been conquered by selfishness and had forgotten that society progressed only when people overcame selfishness. Śrī Basavēśvara waged war against this corrosive selfishness and brought about a moral regeneration of the people. 'The selfish know not the interests of others,' he said, and declared, 'righteousness here is righteousness hereafter.' It is through proper behaviour and good actions that the purity of man's mind and body is preserved. Society is a collection of individuals and an ideal society is a society of good men. Thus Srī Basavēśvara taught:

> These commandments
>   engrave in thy heart —
> Thou shalt not steal
>   nor kill
> Let no falsehood foul thy tongue;
>   nor anger burn thy brow.
> Bear with one another,
>   and suffer all men.
> Stand not high in thy own esteem.
>   So shall thy ways
>   both of heart and demeanour

proclaim thy purity;
and shall favour find
Of Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.[1]

There are no limits to man's desire. It always exceeds his own intention and knows no satiety. It is desire which leads to re-birth and which is the source of all calamities. Thwarted desire results in anger and from anger flow all evil things. Srī Basavēśvara, therefore, taught men to believe that the best way was to give up desire. People who live in society endanger its well-being when they, like the ancient Rāvaṇa, hanker after others' goods and others' women.

Śrī Basavēśvara condemned all forms of violence to life and held the eating of flesh to be a most sinful act. He preached kindness to all living creatures and said that no religion would be worth the name without it:

What sort of religion can it be
Without compassion?
Compassion needs must be
Towards all living things;
Compassion is the root
Of all religious faith:
Lord Kūḍala Saṅga does not care
For what is not like this.[2]

Basavēśvara upheld Truth and rejected Untruth. Truth was God for him:

Behold! between the worlds
Of mortals and of gods
There is no difference!
To speak the truth is world of gods;
To speak untruth, the mortal world.
Good works is Heaven,
Bad works is Hell —
And you can witness it,
O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama![3]

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1 Thus Spake Basava. v. 96 Pub. by Basava Samiti, Bangalore.

2 Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa, Trans. by A. Menezes and S. M. Angadi, Pub. Aṇṇana Baḷaga Sirigere (1965) — v. 89.

3 Ibid. v. 84.

Basavēśvara impressed upon the people the value of the great teaching of the Upaniṣads — 'Speak Truth and act righteously'. The Śaraṇa dharma which he preached is firmly founded on righteousness in word and deed and has the dimensions of a universal religion.

The stability of a society depends on its moral values. It is through these values that the good of the individual, of the society or of the country at large is achieved. A good society necessarily believes in freedom, equality and fraternity. Basavēśvara, who aimed at establishing such a society, rebelled against caste distinctions and taught men to believe that the devotees had no caste, that they were all equal. He realised that the ideal of equality could be a fact only when the class taboos in respect of food and marriage were removed and when the unwanted practice of deciding the worth of an individual on the basis of his or her occupation was done away with. Śrī Basavēśvara declared that the devotees of God irrespective of the professions they followed, were all equal, and that they were the truly well-born. And, as equals, they could freely eat with each other and marry into each other's families. These principles that Basavēśvara preached were gloriously vindicated by the marriage which he brought about between the daughter of Madhuvayya, a brahmin, and the son of Haraḷayya, an untouchable.

In our own times it is widely acknowledged that women in society have equal rights with men. But the religions contemporaneous with Śaraṇa dharma strictly discriminated between men and women. Women were denied religious rights and irrespective of the caste they belonged, they led the life of a Śūdra. Basavēśvara worked hard towards the elimination of these disparities and succeeded in giving women all the social and religious rights which men enjoyed. The society which had been half paralysed in the absence of freedom for women, received from him new life and energy. Basavēśvara condemned child marriages and encouraged widow remarriages, and thereby strengthened the social structure and promoted its orderly growth.

The individuals who form a society must be industrious. Otherwise, the community will have to face an economic crisis. Basavēśvara

knew this well and said that refusal to work and resorting to beggary was a heinous sin. He evolved a new concept of work which stressed the primary importance of the sense of duty rather than of its rewards and called it *Kāyaka*. Work becomes Kāyaka only when it leads to self-realisation through social service. The devotees of God (the Śaraṇas) held this tenet of Kāyaka in great reverence and believed that not even Śiva was exempt from it. Thus in the new society which Śrī Basavēśvara founded idleness and beggary had no place. Since every one had to work, the economic structure of the society became naturally strong. The sense of dignity of labour promoted the feeling of equality. Work, of course, brought its monetary rewards but Basavēśvara warned the people that they should never undertake work with the sole object of making money. He said that it was a great sin to sell or buy an article at an unjust price. He did not discriminate between profession and profession, and, thus, broke, once for all, the unholy alliance maintained so far between caste and profession. Work achieved its proper status in society and this resulted in the release of tremendous energy for the good of the people. The society of the Śaraṇas evolved itself into an ideal and perfect society since its values were based on industry, selfless service, devotion to work and freedom of thought.

In order to preserve the society he had built up, Śrī Basavēśvara pioneered the tradition of having mathas almost in each village, duly manned by rectors and teachers to enlighten the society with his new ideas, fight the evils that might crop up from time to time therein and, through them, ensured the smooth functioning of the social order and its permanent unity. Speaking of the society which Śrī Brasvēśvara brought in M. R. Shrinivasamurthy writes, 'Basavaṇṇa is a social reformer. If what he created was in a sense a great co-operative community, in another sense it was a socialistic state; in yet another, a highly advanced democratic polity'.

The man who achieved all this was a man of no common greatness. The contribution he made to the evolution of human society was of a kind rarely paralleled in the history of man.

M. S. SUNKAPUR

The oyster-shell awaits
the pearly drop
with half-opened mouth:
even so for your grace
I stand and wait.
You're the home-of-all, womb-of-all,
my sole refuge,
my soul's refuge.
Save me,
O Lord, Kuḍala Saṅgama!

KĀYAKA AND DIGNITY OF LABOUR

Kāyaka is a New outlook towards work

Basava is an outstanding socio-spiritual reformer of India. Like Buddha he organised a mass movement on a large scale against a caste-ridden society. The priestly class and the princely class who praised one another as gods on earth kept the masses under subjugation through fear and superstition. Discrimination, inequality, and segregation became the evil practices of the orthodox caste-society. But Basava in the 12th Century in Karnāṭak in South India taught a new outlook towards life and labour. Many teachers of the world renounced mundane life and devoted it exclusively to mere preaching. Basava lived a married life and followed a Kāyaka as a Minister under King Bijjaḷa. He was not an itinerant preacher. Kāyaka literally means physical labour or work of the body. Kāya means body and kāyaka means work done by the body. In its wider sense as preached and practised by Basava and a host of other Śaraṇas it means an occupation, a profession, a vocation, labour, work, duty or any employment undertaken as a means of self-realization. Kāyaka enjoins that every one must do a duty. Its underlying principle is that man should not live an idle life but be an earning member of the society. It is opposed to the idea of meditation in a forest, running away from society; it is opposed to Sanyāsa or renunciation; and it is opposed to beggary and dependence on others for a living. Kāyaka cuts at the root of the traditional Varṇa or caste order of society and the Āśrama or compartmental stages of life. It is a new

outlook towards man and his labour and towards life and divinity. It embodies the principles of dignity of man and dignity of labour which are quite alien to the traditional way of life in India imposed on society by the self-motivated preaching class. The Kāyaka view of life is in conformity with the modern democratic principles of equality, justice, liberty and fraternity which are laid down in the preamble to the Constitution of India.

Kāyaka is a spiritual view of labour and not merely a materialistic view. According to Kāyaka man has to sublimate his physical labour into a spiritual pursuit. The mercenary motive is sublimated into spiritual motive. Carlyle says "Work is worship" and a Śaraṇa says "Work is heaven". The Kannaḍa saying is "Kāyakave Kailāsa." Every labour is looked upon by Śaraṇa with high honour, dignity and spiritual significance. Kāyaka does not encourage amassing wealth or hoarding of money. It is not motivated by profit. Kāyaka is to be done in the spirit of *Dāsoha*. The earning from Kāyaka is to be dedicated to the preacher or Jaṅgama who in his turn utilizes it for the good of the society. Kāyaka is a duty by which each one has to maintain oneself, and render its proceeds to the welfare of the society as a whole. This is the comprehensive view of Kāyaka.

Kāyaka is not Karma

The democratic principle of freedom of occupation is embodied in Kāyaka. The Karma theory which has given rise to Caste system in society is opposed to this principle. It dictates that each man's occupation is pre-determined by birth. It says that man has no freedom to choose any vocation he likes and no freedom to think and act as he likes. The protagonists of the Karma theory advocate that one has to follow the hereditary profession; that a farmer's son should become a farmer, a barber's son a barber, a preacher's son a preacher and so on. Basava revolted against this. He advocated freedom of occupation and dignity of labour. This is crystallized in Kāyaka. Basava says emphatically that he does not want to ask what Kāyaka one is following. He condemns vehemently any discrimination on the basis of birth, sex or occupation. He considers Karma as an "impurity" (or Mala). The history of India reveals

that the Karma theory has hampered the progress of society and has caused economic stagnation. The Kāyaka theory on the other hand supports the progressive view of the society and the development of national economy. Beggary and idleness have no place in the Kāyaka system of society. Kāyaka and Dāsoha emphasize self-denial and charity.

Anubhava Maṇṭapa a Spiritual Parliament

The method adopted by Basava for propagating the tenets of his faith is unique. He settled at Kalyāṇa as a Minister of Bijjaḷa. He discharged the duties of his ministership as a Kāyaka. He practised what he preached. He established a spiritual parliament called Anubhava Maṇṭapa at Kalyāṇa. People from far and near came and settled at Kalyāṇa and participated in the discourses that were carried on at the Anubhava Maṇṭapa. This institution is unique in several respects. In the history of the spiritual movements in the world there is no other example, except that of Basava, where a founder of a faith or a reformist has adopted the democratic method of meeting together for discussing and for laying down the path of spiritual advancement and social reconstruction based on free thinking. Almost all the renowned teachers of the various countries in the world moved from place to place to preach their gospel or to interpret the earlier scriptures. Basava adopted a new method. He did not renounce life like Buddha nor did he move from place to place preaching his gospel. He did not write his commentaries like Śaṅkara on old scriptures. He was a free thinker and led a host of people to think freely like him. The members of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa who participated in its deliberations followed various Kāyakas, or occupations. The deliberations and discussions took place in Kannaḍa. They have been recorded in the form of Vacanas. Each Saying or Vacana is a self-contained unit and is a free expression of the Śaraṇa on spiritual, ethical or economic subject.

The fundamental principles accepted by Basava and the other Śaraṇas of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa may be summarised as follows:

1 All man are equal
2 No man is high or low either by birth, sex or occupation

3 There is no discrimination between man and man and between man and woman
4 Woman has equal rights with man to follow the path of self-evolution
5 Each one should follow a profession of his own choice
6 Women also can take up any Kāyaka
7 All Kāyakas are honourable professions. No Kāyaka is either low or high
8 Varṇas (or castes) and Aśramas (or stages) are to be discarded
9 Self-development is to be achieved through Kāyaka
10 Renunciation and dwelling in forest are ruled out as cowardly tendencies to escape from life.
11 Inter-group marriages and free dining should be encouraged
12 Untouchability has no place in the society
13 Every man is free to think on all spiritual and social subjects.
14 Reason and experience are the only guiding lights for free thinking and spiritual advancement.
15 Language of the people should be the medium for imparting spiritual and secular education
16 All men have equal rights to participate in spiritual discussions, to acquire spiritual knowledge and to follow the same path of self-evolution.

The Anubhava Maṇṭapa was a regular institution. The deliberations that took place in it were a sort of symposium. They are recorded in the form of Vacanas in Kannaḍa. Men and women, married and unmarried people who followed different Kāyakās participated in the deliberations. Each one of them has composed vacanas. Some of the Kāyakās followed by the Śaraṇas of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa are mentioned here — Pot-making, wood-cutting, washing, shoe-making, haircutting, cattle-grazing, rowing, farming, sewing, tailoring, basket making, weaving, trading, carpentry, smithy, etc. All the Śaraṇas irrespective of their Kāyakas enjoyed equal status. Mārayya was a Prince, Mācidēva was a washerman, Appaṇṇa was a barber, Cauḍayya was a ferryman, Cannayya was a cobbler, Kētayya was a basket-maker, Rāmaṇṇa was a cattle grazer, Siddarāma was an earth mover, and so on. This Anubhava Maṇṭapa has, perhaps, no parallel in the spiritual history of mankind.

Significance of Kāyaka in Modern Life

The teachings of Basava have great significance for a democratic

society of the modern world. In a democratic society sovereignty lies with the public. It has no place for kingship or imperialism. In a democratic government the procedure followed is group discussion, group decision and group execution. This was exactly the procedure followed in the Anubhava Maṇṭapa. People of different Kāyakas held group discussion in the Maṇṭapa and arrived at decisions which were put into practice. They have come to us in the form of vacanas. The main topics dealt with in these vacanas are in respect of Aṣṭāvaraṇa, or eight aids to faith, Pañcācāra, or five rules of conduct and Ṣaṭsthala or six stages of self-evolution. The Aṣṭāvarṇas deal with spiritual psycholoy, the Pañcācāras deal with ethical behaviour, and the Ṣaṭsthalas deal with metaphysical evolution. In a modern democratic society all men have equal rights in the pursuit of knowledge, wealth and power. This was so in the case of the members of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa. Rich or poor, married or unmarried, and men of different occupations were all welcome with equal respect and rights. In a democracy free thinking is the right of every person. The vacanas of the various Śaraṇas are the outcome of free thinking. In a socialistic society constructed by Basava there were no monopolies and no privileges. He revolted against the orthodox caste system which gave rise to a feudal type of society. Knowledge was monopolised by the priestly class, political power by the princely class, wealth by the merchant class and slavery was the lot of the working class. These social disparities became hereditary and led to discrimination and stagnation. These social evils were up-rooted by Basava and his colleagues. Though Basava was a minister he said that no one was lesser than he; though Mārayya was a prince he took the Kāyaka of a wood-cutter, though Maḍivāḷa was a washerman he revolted as a warrior. Irrespective of birth, sex, position and occupation, all the Śaraṇas followed the one and the same spiritual path.

The teachings of Basava had profound influence on the life of the people in their daily affairs. The brotherhood of man established by him was practised in every day (walk of) life. Each one addressed the other as brother or sister, as father or mother. Basava is renown-

ed as Aṇṇa, or brother, and Mahādēvi as Akka, or sister. Even today the terms Akka, Aṇṇa, Appa and Avva are used as suffixes to the personal names of the vast majority of the people in Karnāṭak. Woman is shown respect by accosting her as goddess, or devi. According to the preachings and practice of Basava the whole mankind is a brotherhood. This mission is in line with the modern concept that all humanity is one.

In a democratic economy every one must be an earning member of the society. In a planned economy beggary and unemployment are unthinkable in any form or sense. Even preachers should not be parasites on society but accept the profession of preaching as a Kāyaka for social service. According to Basava no one is to beg. He should rather work as a coolie than be a beggar.

In one of his vacanas Basava says that good conduct is heaven and bad conduct is hell. This aphorism of Basava serves as a beacon light to the modern world of materialists. According to Basava Society is dynamic and progressive but not static. The Śaraṇas never disparaged mundane life for the sake of spiritual life. Nor did they consider married life to be in any way inferior to unmarried life. In their scheme of life, secularism is not contrary to spirituality and scientific outlook is not repugnant to spiritual outlook. The human body is looked upon as sacred as a temple and Kāyaka as salvation itself.

The aphori.m "work is heaven" contains a comprehensive view of Kāyaka as expounded in the philosophy of the Śaraṇas.

V. K. JAVALI

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA AND FREE THINKING

Asia in general and India in particular cannot boast of a long tradition of free thinking, although their contribution to the intellectual heritage of mankind has been quite substantial. In the west the dogmas of religion began to be challenged by rationalist school of thought resulting in the growth of scientific attitude. Social and political ideas were both the cause and effect of these developments. The spirit of enquiry, political consciousness and rational outlook became the valuable legacy of the west. This explains the dynamism of the European society and its supremacy in modern history.

The impression of the western observers has been that Indian society historically has been unchanging, and even today it is strongly tradition-bound. Some critics have further alleged that on account of the lack of free thinking and of action-mindedness, the people of India were destined to remain a backward society.

Though the above allegation cannot be taken as wholly true, the fact remains that free thinking in India was not encouraged. Excepting a few flashes during the period of the Upaniṣads, and during the rise of Buddhism, the story of India has been one of intellectual stagnation. Even under the western impact social change does not seem to be as quick as it should have been. Viewed from this angle, the contribution of Basava to the cause of free thinking should be regarded as unique.

The historic rôle of Basava has not been adequately assessed

from the standpoint of the growth of rational outlook in India. Many have admired him as a great religious reformer. He has been compared to Martin Luther. He has also been hailed as the chief architect of a new literary style and tradition in Karnāṭak. He occupies a distinct place in the religious and literary history of the land. Innumerable poets from the 12th century to the present time have paid high tributes to his qualities of head and heart. But there does not seem to be a true appreciation of his personality as a free thinker.

Basava is to be regarded as an epoch-maker in the social history of Karnāṭak because he inititated a bold and revolutionary social movement, and left a great legacy of free thinking. Basava launched his new movement with the loftiest ideals. His movement aimed at the abolition of all inequalities and removal of all obstacles and inhibitions and social disabilities inherent in the traditional social order. Basavēśvara's achievements have been genuinely acknowledged by many thinkers.

Arthur Miles observes thus in his book, 'The Land of the Liṅgam': "Whatever legend may say about Basava, the fact is pretty clear that he was the first Indian free thinker. He might be called the Luther of India. The acknowledged leadership of the priests was in full swing when Basava came upon the stage, and there was a movement afoot to replace caste and the priestly authority with intelligence and free thinking.

"Basava mounted the rostrum of the abolition of caste and ceremonies and preached that all men by birth are equal, that one sect was as important as another..."

The Times of India in its Editorial of 17—5—1918, observes thus: "It was the distinctive feature of his mission that while illustrious religious and social reformers in India before him had each laid his emphasis on one or other item of religious and social reform, either subordinating more or less other items to it, or ignoring them altogether, Basava sketched and boldly tried to work out a large and comprehensive programme of social reform with the elevation and independence of womanhood as its guiding point. Neither social

conferences which are annually held in these days in several parts of India, nor Indian social reformers, can improve upon that programme as to the essentials. As was in substance remarked by the late Sir James Campbell, whose knowledge of Indian history, customs and manners was almost phenomenal, the present-day social reformer in India is but speaking the language and seeking to enforce the mind of Basava."

Basava did away with caste distinctions and liberated women and the untouchables from social tyranny; his movement was the beginning of a renaissance. It gave free scope for discussion, and taught the dignity of labour. Basava inculcated the spirit of looking upon any work as worship. He emancipated the people from age-long social superstitions and restored in them self-reliance, self-confidence, the spirit of freedom and initiative. He thus not only achieved social solidarity on democratic foundations, but also made the common man pulsate with new energy and enthusiasm. He gave the country a new literature called Vacana Sāhitya, heralding a new epoch in the history of the land. In a word, Basava achieved a great social transformation in the life of the nation. He brought about a synthesis of head, heart and hand, Jñāna, Bhakti and Kriyā. In all these ways his movement tended to elevate the nation in general, and women in particular.

Basava's movement has few parallels in the history of the world. Through his peaceful technique of converting the opponents to his way of thinking, he anticipated Mahatma Gandhi's method of self-imposed suffering. During his time, the practice of standing on wooden sandals with pointed nails was adopted. Those who did so were known as men of muḷḷāvigeya kāyaka (demonstration of standing on spiked footwear) whereby the innocent suffered for the delinquent in order to call him to repentance. This method of discipline made the nation strong and released the latent energy of the masses, which could be utilised for national regeneration. The uncommon spirit of patriotism and fellowship which was manifested in the foundation of Vijayanagar and later was due, to a considerable extent, to the new awakening effected by Basava's popular social experiment. Although

heroism and discipline were not unknown to Kannaḍigas in earlier times, the spirit that was generated by Basava was responsible for new manifestations of these virtues in the age that followed. A decadent people were inspired and quickened, ready to face any danger which confronted them. Scholars have called the Age of Basava the age of people's emancipation and Basava the maker of Swātantrya Yuga. For he asserted human rights and thereby lifted society to great heights from the morass into which it had fallen. It was no mean revival; it was a veritable revolution indeed, as the new society he created began to throb with new values and a new outlook. Basava can be regarded as *Swātantryadīkṣā Guru*, for he was at once the apotheosis and symbol of freedom of thought and action. Basava's movement influenced the thought and life of the country for centuries.

The many-sided achievements of Basava are pretty well known. He has carved out a permanent place for himself in the religious and social history of our country by his splended work as a great reformer. He was not only a reformer, but was the creator of a new tradition in the literary history of our land. His vacanas show how Kannaḍa language can be made flexible and at the same time be invested with new vigour and strength. The loftiest thoughts of this great humanitarian have issued in the form of vacanas. As Śrī Ālūr Veṅkaṭa Rao has aptly remarked: "His profound thoughts and words are gems of rare beauty and charm, which strike the heart as well as understanding."

Basavēśvara not only struck a new path in Kannaḍa literary expression but he has placed the world under a deep debt of gratitude through his social and religious ideas and ideals. He can be regarded as a great champion of human rights, who revived the humanitarian outlook of the Buddha and enriched it in his own way.

The essence of Basava's message may be summed up in the expression 'Universal man', because his teaching represents the dimensions of Universal moral values. He revolted against social tyranny and pleaded for liberation of man. The aim of his movement was to restore the status of man in all his human dignity. He

emphasised man's basic rights without which free development of man is not possible. At a time when we are trying to build a new society, based on new democratic values we can draw inspiration from the teachings and work of Basava. In the national history of our country as a free thinker and a great reformer Basava ranks with such great souls as Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi. There is need for a better understanding of his life's mission, and a wider appreciation of his teachings.

G. S. HALAPPA

At rise of moon the ocean swells;
It ebbs at waning of the moon...
When Rāhu puts a screen
Before the moon, pray, does the sea
Set up a cry?
And when the Sage drained up the sea,
Pray, did the moon come in between?
Nobody is for anybody, so!
The fallen have no friend!
Thou only, Lord
Kūḍala Saṅgama,
*Art the world's kin!**

BASAVA AND WOMANHOOD

Much has been said and written on Basava and his valuable services to mankind. One, among his manifold contributions towards the rejuvenation of the contemporary tradition-ridden society, was his recognition of woman's individuality and her rights. There is no denying the fact that the position of woman in any society is a significant pointer to the level of culture of that society. In a progressive society as woman's position improves, her subjection diminishes. The ideal society envisaged by Basava and the Śiva-śaraṇas in the 12th century was a significant step towards the emancipation of women. And we shall be in a better position to estimate their epoch-making contribution if we take a review of the status of women in the earlier period.

There is good evidence to believe that in the early Vedic ages women enjoyed equal rights with men. The wife and husband were regarded equal in every respect and both took equal part in all duties — religious and social.[1] Women also took part in the intellectual and spiritual life of the community. Some of the hymns of the Ṛgveda were composed by women. Viśvavara, Apalā, Lopamudrā, Ghoṣa, Indrāṇī and Sacī are mentioned among others as composers of hymns. That women continued to enjoy freedom and respect even in ages following the Vedic period can be inferred from references in Dharma Śāstras. But the period is very brief. The dark period

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1 Ṛgveda V - 61 - 8.

of subjugation of women seems to have begun soon thereafter. Manu has something good to say about women. Where women are honoured, he ordains, there the Gods are pleased; but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite yields rewards.[2] But the deprecatory remarks which he heaps on them almost outweighs the good ones. He regards them as morally low creatures. "It is the nature of the woman to seduce man in this world; for that reason the wise are never unguarded in the company of females."[3] Such verses abound; and it is needless to multiply them. Manu lays down that a woman is never fit for independence. Her father protects her in childhood, her husband in youth, and her sons in her old age[4] They are not entitled to offer prayers, to practise penances, to undertake pilgrimages, to recite Vedic Mantras and to worship Gods! As we shall be noting later, among the many old and evil practices of Hinduism against which Basava revolted was this criminal treatment of woman — the refusal to grant her the status of a human being. Such a religion could not last long. Buddhism and Jainism marked a revolt against the class distinctions preached by the followers of decadent Brahmanism. Her salvation appeared to be near at hand, yet not complete.

Buddhism recognised the individuality and independence of women and their title to salvation in their own right whether married or single. This right was best recognised in the case of the nuns who could work out their Karma, independent of others, just as monks. We have the Thēris, or lady elders, who composed religious hymns. The Thēri Gātha (Songs of the Thēris) includes compositions by seventy-three nuns. However, it is interesting to note in this context that the Buddha himself did not seem to have had a very high opinion of woman. Ānanda, wishing to know how the monks were to conduct themselves before women, asked the Buddha's advice. "Do not look at womankind", replied the Master. "But if we see

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2 Manu-Smṛti III-56.

3 Ibid. II-213.

4 Ibid. IX-3.

women, what are we to do?" pursued Ānanda. "Abstain from speaking to them", ordered the Sire. "But if they speak to us, what are we to do?" pressed Ānanda. "Keep wide awake," was the stern warning of the Buddha! We may also note here that the Buddha had originally turned down the proposal to found an order of nuns. He gave his consent only when pressed by Ānanda!

Jainism did admit women to the religious order of nuns. But there were some differences of opinion between the Digambaras and Svetāmbaras, regarding their title to liberation. The former hold the view that they cannot become perfect without getting reborn as men while the latter maintain that they can, in their own right. The Jains maintain that in the monastic life, the nun is inferior to the monk!

In the eighth-ninth century of the Christian era a three-cornered fight among the Buddhists, the Hindus and the Jains ensued. Brahmanism emerged victorious; and Jainism escaped the fate of Buddhism by making many concessions to Brahmanism.

The twelfth century society in which Basava was born was the same as the traditional post-Vedic society ridden with blind beliefs and faiths. It was a society where women were treated as slaves and chattels. And it was left to Basava to redeem women from the traditional fetters and give them an honorable existence. Basava was the main force behind the founding of Anubhava Maṇṭapa, the forum for religious discussion and experience. It was nurtured mainly by him with the aid of Allama Prabhu and Cannabasava. So, a closer study of the functioning of the Maṇṭapa is bound to give us a more definitive idea of Basava's attitude towards womanhood. The Maṇṭapa had a good number of women as its members. By introducing the ceremony of 'Liṅga Dīkṣā' Vīrśaivism threw open its doors to men and women alike, of all castes and creeds. Women were regarded as in no way inferior to men in spiritual matters. Consequently the contributions in religious experience from women were not only heartily welcomed but also highly appreciated and encouraged. The discussion that took place between Akka Mahādēvi and Allama Prabhu is one of the most glorious chapters in the *Śūnya Saṁpādane*.

There are seven[5] vacanas where Basava makes reference to how woman is to be looked upon.[5] In all these vacanas the main point which Basava drives home to his followers is that to desire another man's wife is a sin; and to look upon a woman not otherwise as sister or mother is a deadlier sin. Thus, he lays down a code of conduct for his followers. One cannot collect a good number of his vacanas and say that this collection is as good as a treatise of Basava in the cause of woman's emancipation. Such a theoretical treatise is unthinkable of Basava. He was, more than anything else, a mystic with unrivalled practical knowledge of the world. He thought that practice was better than either pleading or preaching. We get evidence of his broad view of woman in his treatment of his wives, Nīlāṁbike and Gaṅgāṁbike, his sister Nāgalāṁbike, and a good number of women-saints who participated in the religious discussions at Anubhava Maṇṭapa. Some of these women-saints were married and some single. Basava, who was himself happily married twice never laid down that a wife could be an obstacle to high spiritual attainment. Nīlāṁbike and Gaṅgāṁbike, it appears, enjoyed a good deal of freedom. They were certainly close followers of their husband, always by his side, helping him in the discharge of his duties — political and religious. At the same time, they participated in the discussions of the Aaubhava Maṇṭapa on their own and wrote their own vacanas. His sister, Nāgalāṁbike, it is believed, was also closely associated with him. An event in the last days of Basava throws a good deal of light on the stature of their own they had attained under his influence. After being disillusioned about the state of affairs in Kalyāṇa, Basava decides to leave Kalyāṇa for good. He departed for Saṅgama, where he would become one with Liṅga. Both of his wives were then at Kalyāṇa. Perhaps, he did not consider it proper on his part to have left them behind. He therefore sends Haḍapada Appaṇṇa to bring them to Saṅgama. Nīlāṁbike, on receiving the message, asks herself

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1 Basavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu ed. by Prof. S. S. Basavanal (1962 edition). Nos. 445, 446, 640, 641, 643, 676 and 735.

why Basava asked her to go to Saṅgama. Could she not seek her salvation in Kalyāṇa itself?[6] Liṅga is there, but Liṅga is here, too. And Basava is always in her thoughts. On second thoughts, she starts off, but never to meet Basava. Hardly had she reached Taṅgaḍigi, the sad news of her husband's death reaches her, and she becomes one with Liṅga then and there.

On the other hand, Gaṅgāmbike stays back at Kalyāṇa. She, along with Nāgalāmbike, it is understood, joins the army of the Śiva Śaraṇas to fight Bijjaḷa and his followers, who were, in the name of religion, indulging in atrocities. It is said that she died fighting. It may be noted here that Nīlāmbike and Gaṅgāmbike are the products of Basava's influence. Their fully blossomed personalities, their capacity to think and to act on their own is an indication of how Basava had inspired them to grow and develop. Woman shows herself at her best when encouraged by her parents or husband. Basava had heralded an age of honour, economic and social equality for women. The wind of change which softly blew made many more women grew to the full stature they were capable of growing. Āydakki Lakkamma had the good sense to advise her husband to go back and bring rice just sufficient for them both, for one day, and not more! Greed is not worthy of Śivaśaraṇas.[7] It is believed that there were hundreds of women-saints. Unfortunately

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6 alligennanu barahēḷidarante
allirpa Saṅgamanillillave?
alli illi eṁba ubhayasandēhavu
balla mahātmarigidu guṇave?
—Śivaśaraṇeyara Caritregaḷu ed. by P. G. Haḷakatti p. 145.

7 āseyeṁbudu arasiṅgallade
Śivabhaktariguṇṭe ayyā?
rōṣaveṁbudu yamadūtarigallade
ajātariguṇṭe ayyā?
īsakkiyāse nimagēke? Īśvaranoppa.
Amarēśvaraliṅgakke dūra Mārayyā.
—Śivaśaraṇeyar Caritregaḷu ed. by P. G. Haḷakaṭṭi p. 45.

we have at present vacanas of only thirty. The one who excelled all is Mahādeviyakka. She received highest words of praise from Basava, Allamaprabhu, Cannnabasava, Siddharāmayya, and Maḍivāḷayya. On account of her conflict with her 'husband' king Kauśika, she leaves home for her spiritual salvation. Then all roads led to Kalyāṇa. So, she paves her way in that direction. On the way, she had to face a number of difficulties. The idea of a woman asserting her own, moving out without protection was strange and unthinkable. Had not the Śāstras laid down that woman at no stage was fit to enjoy freedom? She has beautifully narrated the difficulties, she had to face on her way. She had to go to wells and ponds when she felt thirsty. She had to resort to old temples when she felt weary. The woman who was subjected to only angry looks and sneering questions from society comes to receive kind hospitality in the house of Basava at Kalyāṇa! She refers to Basava as her spiritual father.[8] And Basava, on the other hand, looks upon her as his mother.[9] She was in age younger than he, but in her pursuit for spiritual salvation, he notes, that she was superior to him. It speaks of his humility and at the same time his recognition of Mahādēviyakka's greatness. And in honouring her he has honoured womanhood. It is significant to note here that it is he who introduces her to Allamaprabhu.[10] Then a spiritual discourse ensues wherein Mahādēviyakka is tested by Allama and other Śaranas. And Mahādēviyakka emerges as

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8 Basavaṇṇana maneya magaḷāgi badukidenāgi,
tanna karuṇa bhaktiprasādava koṭṭanu.
—Śūnya Saṁpādane, p. 293, ed. by Prof. S. S. Bhusnurmath (1965).

9 enna hetta tāyi Mahādēviyakkana
nilva nōḍayya Prabhuve. Ibid. v. 8, p. 280

10 rūhilladaṅge olidavarige tanuvina haṅguṇṭe?
manavilladavaṅge maccidavarige abhimānada haṅguṇṭe?
digaṁbaraṅge olidavarige kaupīnada haṅguṇṭe?
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvayyā, Mahādēviyakkaneṁba bhaktege
āva horeyū ill nōḍā Prabhuve! Ibid. v. 9, p. 280.

the Saint among Saints. Basava along with others joins in the chorus of her praise:

enna bhaktiya śaktiyū nīne.
enna muktiya śaktiyū nīne.
enna yuktiya śaktiyū nīne.[11]

Women could not have been honoured better. There are a good number of reformers who worked for securing social, economic and political rights for women. None, however, worked to secure equal rights in the field of religion, too. The Jains and the Buddhists opened doors to women, but after a lot of hesitation. Basava is the one and only one who declared that woman is entitled to religious initiation and salvation same as man! Often, the Sociologists trace the history of the movement of woman's emancipation from Raja Rām Mohan Roy. There is no denying the fact that Roy's contribution for the cause of woman in the modern period is significant. But let us remember that woman's emancipation with Basava was not merely a matter for merely a social reform (although to proclaim the doctrine of the equality of sexes in that dim 12th century was an achievement in itself) but a veritable article of faith. He not only anticipated but lived and practised the spirit of the Hindu Code Bill.

SAROJINI SHINTRI

11 Śūnya Saṁpādane v. 61, p. 292

Oh the mind — mine intelligence!
It's the full-grown serpent
in a charmer's grip,
or swaying and dancing to his tune,
his obedient slave:
an unguarded moment, and roused
by an ungovernable rage,
it strikes the charmer himself!
May I ever learn to keep my mind —
lest it kill the body that gave it birth —
in fullest, safest restraint,
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama!

HOMAGE TO BASAVA

"Whenever true religion is on the decline and irrational superstition ascends, then do I take birth in this world to redeem the truth", said Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā. The fascinating story of Hindu religion, philosophy and civilization illustrates the truth of this statement. In the course of several centuries Hindu civilization has maintained perennial vigour and youth and the secret of this significant phenomenon lies in the fact that many high-souled dissenters and reformers were born from time to time and they strove to remove the impurities which had come to be associated with the theories and practice of religion, and sought to redeem truth. Buddha, Mahāvīra, Dayānanda, Rām Mōhan Roy, Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa, Vivekānand are some of the great dissenters who helped the process of discovering and re-establishing truth in their time. Mahātma Basava deserves a place of pride in this galaxy of great dissenters and redeemers.

The religion which Basava preached was essentially a social religion. He was primarily a rebel and revolutionary who opposed Brahmanism of his time, its claims to spiritual and social leadership and the particular merit that it associated with the performance of religious rites and sacrifices. Basava proclaimed the significance of devotion to God and love amongst His creatures and made this dual concept the sole basis of the edifice of a socio-religious philosophy. He did away with all the obligatory rituals of Brahmanism and liberated common men and women from the domination of priests

Oh the mind — mine intelligence!
It's the full-grown serpent
in a charmer's grip,
or swaying and dancing to his tune,
his obedient slave:
an unguarded moment, and roused
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May I ever learn to keep my mind —
lest it kill the body that gave it birth —
in fullest, safest restraint,
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama!

HOMAGE TO BASAVA

"Whenever true religion is on the decline and irrational superstition ascends, then do I take birth in this world to redeem the truth", said Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā. The fascinating story of Hindu religion, philosophy and civilization illustrates the truth of this statement. In the course of several centuries Hindu civilization has maintained perennial vigour and youth and the secret of this significant phenomenon lies in the fact that many high-souled dissenters and reformers were born from time to time and they strove to remove the impurities which had come to be associated with the theories and practice of religion, and sought to redeem truth. Buddha, Mahāvīra, Dayānanda, Rām Mōhan Roy, Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa, Vivekānand are some of the great dissenters who helped the process of discovering and re-establishing truth in their time. Mahātma Basava deserves a place of pride in this galaxy of great dissenters and redeemers.

The religion which Basava preached was essentially a social religion. He was primarily a rebel and revolutionary who opposed Brahmanism of his time, its claims to spiritual and social leadership and the particular merit that it associated with the performance of religious rites and sacrifices. Basava proclaimed the significance of devotion to God and love amongst His creatures and made this dual concept the sole basis of the edifice of a socio-religious philosophy. He did away with all the obligatory rituals of Brahmanism and liberated common men and women from the domination of priests

and from the spiritual and liturgical dogmatism of the priesthood. He entirely rejected the caste system and vehemently denounced the notion that some communities are superior to some others and eradicated this complex of superiority or inferiority from the minds of his disciples. His teachings were addressed to all men and women alike and were not limited to a particular class or group. He fought for the emancipation of women and accorded them equal status with men. He treated Harijans and members of other backward classes on the same plane of equality as persons of the more advanced communities. Social equality was the very breath of Basava's philosophy; service to the community at large and devotion to the Lord, constituted the primary *Sādhana* or means for human liberation.

He broke the monopoly of knowledge enshrined in Sanskrit and carried the stream of his thoughts to the doors of the ordinary men and women by speaking to them in their language. Traditionally, Sanskrit was the sole repository of Hindu philosophy and religious thought. Basava broke this monopoly of Sanskrit and made the spoken language of the masses, the vehicle for the spread of his own philosophy.

In a sense, Basava was a greater heretic and rebel from the point of view of Brahmanism or orthodox Hinduism than Christ was with regard to Judaism. In another sense Basava helped to remove the overgrowth of superstitions and ignorance which had invaded the Hindu religious thought and practice and sought to restore the Hindu philosophy and practices to their pristine glory of the Upaniṣadic times. That is why Basava can be regarded as an Avatāra of divinity and the story of his life can be treated as the fulfilment of the statement of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā.

The creed of Basava is a permanent revolution against the power of priesthood, against dogmatism, temple-cults, caste and class privileges and social inequality in every form. The message of Basava, like that of Buddha, is a message of love and compassion, coupled with devotion; it treats all men and women as equal and it makes no distinction between one person and another. This message had a revolutionary impact on the socio-economic ideology and religious thought of his times.

"Gird up your loins", said Basava, "and come to the field; yours is the lot to fight, not to yield. Life is a struggle and a battle; nothing can be won without trouble." The contemporary defeatist view of life which emphasised the worthlessness of human existence in this world and which required men and women to escape from the miseries of this existence was foreign to Basava's philosophy. Basava taught the doctrine that Life is real; that Life is earnest and the grave is not its goal. He wanted his disciples to face the challenge of life with courage and determination and he emphasised the importance of the doctrine of work.

Whenever I think of Basava and his teachings, I am tempted to believe that the essence of his message can be compared to the motto which was adopted by some of the followers of Buddha. Says this motto: "Go with heart full of compassion into this world which is torn by sorrow. Teach, and wherever shadows and ignorance prevail, light a torch."

Today several clouds seem to gather strength on the horizon of India and common men and women look perplexed and frustrated and show symptoms of gathering anger and indignation. At such a time in the history of India, I think all of us can go back to Basava and seek guidance, inspiration and light from his philosophy. If Basava's philosophy is properly understood and interpreted to the common men and women of India, it will help the country in its onward march in search of happiness, social equality and spiritual good.

P. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR

O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord,
Thy Māyā encompasses the world;
But, look, my mind
Is able to encompass Thee!
Thou'rt mightier than the world;
But, look, I'm mightier than Thou!
Even as an elephant is
Held in a mirror, so Thou
In me! *

BASAVA'S IMMORTAL MESSAGE

The life of great men is a purposeful life; it is never selfish but is always a sacrifice made for the betterment of the life of their fellowmen. Yet, it is seen that the world has been never kind to them while alive. Jesus was crucified; Abraham Lincoln and John Kennedy fell victims to great causes, and Mahātma Gandhi was shot dead; not because they were selfish, not because they were unjust, but because they saw things much ahead of their times and worked for them. Though Basava was not shot at, nor executed nor crucified, yet, his end also was in no way better. People understand the worth of such men only after their death and realise their folly and try to make amends for their misdeeds by recalling their lives and teachings on such occasions as centenary celebrations or birth anniversaries and take a leaf, if possible, from their lives and teachings so as to make their own lives more sublime.

Basavēśvara was undoubtedly a great mystic saint, a great social reformer and a great literary figure. He lived his life, as all great men have lived for the well-being of their fellowmen. Basava was not a founder of a religion, in the sense that Jesus is the founder of Christianity, the Buddha of Buddhism, or Mahomed of Islam. But he was one of those who rose in revolt against superfluous ceremonies and rituals and the caste system of Hinduism which made people forget the essence of religion and care more for the shell than for the substance.

Basava was born in the 12th century at Iṅgaḷēśvar Bāgewāḍi in

the District of Bijapur. He is considered to be an incarnation of Nandikēśvara. His life, till he became Minister to King Bijjaḷa of Kalyāṇa, is, to some extent, shrouded in mystery. However, it would appear that he showed signs of greatness and a critical approach to religion even while he was young. There is evidence to show that he was born in a devout Brahmin family; but when, according to the custom of the community, he was to be initiated with the performance of the Upanayana ceremony and arrangements had been made for the ceremony, he reacted to it sharply by refusing to undergo the same. He argued with the priests and paṇḍits pointing out to them that he had already been initiated by investing him with a Liṅga and, therefore, he would not agree to undergo the Upanayana ceremony. He thereafter went to his Guru Jātavēda Muni at Kūḍala Saṅgama.

His maternal uncle Baladēva was Prime Minister to King Bijjaḷa of Kalyāṇa. Himself a devout Śivabhakta, Baladēva, though shocked by Basava's refusal to undergo the Upanayana ceremony, was greatly impressed by the courage shown by his young nephew and gave his daughter in marriage to him. Basava, while at Kūḍala Saṅgama, was coached by his Guru. There he earned a name for himself, and, after Baladēva, was called upon to assume the office of Minister to King Bijjaḷa. Basava died in the year 1167 and his achievements, within a short span of 36 years, both in the social and the religious spheres, and his contribution to the Kannaḍa literature, are outstanding.

While discharging his duties as Minister, he noticed the conditions of the Hindu society which, on account of its insistence on superfluous ceremonials and rituals and the caste system, was facing the danger of being dissipated. To the Hindu lawgivers, society consists of four classes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. The last class of people, though admitted as a part of the society, yet, in practice, was denied the right of citizenship. Thus the higher life was meant only for the few. The lower class was considered to be fit only to serve the higher without any of the benefits which the latter was enjoying. Though it is said 'Cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ' i.e., the Hindu society was to begin with, divided into four varṇas

based on merit and occupation, yet such a division, once made, continued hereditarily irrespective of merit and occupation; and, in due course of time, the various castes became water-tight. Thus a person born in a Brahmin family continued to be a Brahmin whereas a person born in the Śūdra family remained a Śūdra for ever, irrespective of merit or occupation, with the result that a degeneration in the Hindu society had set in.

It was in such circumstances that Basava raised his cry of revolt against the forces of decay and degeneration. He thought that the caste system did not help to forge unity among the people and stood in the way of the solidarity of the Hindus, thus preventing the growth of a united nation. The higher caste oppressed the lower caste, and women were looked upon as mere chattels, thus denying them an honoured place in the society. He, therefore, attempted to break through this evil, and put the Hindu society on a more equitable basis, on the basis of love and humanity. He preached that every person, whether high or low, rich or poor, jaṅgama or otherwise, must work and earn his or her own livelihood. He thus said 'Kāyakave Kailasa' (Work is heaven).

Untouchability was considered a blot on the Hindu society, and he strove to remove it. It is an historical fact that he brought about a marriage between a Brahmin girl and an untouchable boy. It is also evident that to his Anubhava Maṇṭapa men and women, irrespective of caste, creed and colour, rank or position, were admitted. Thus Jēḍara Dāsimayya was a weaver, Śaṅkara Dāsimayya was a tailor, Maḍivāḷa Mācayya was a washerman, Mēdāra Kētayya was a basket-maker, Kinnari Bommayya was a goldsmith, Vakkala Muddayya was a farmer, Haḍapada Appaṇṇa was a barber, Jōdara Mādaṇṇa was a soldier, Gāṇada Kannappa was a fisherman, Ḍōhara Kakkayya was a tanner, Mādara Cannayya was a cobbler and Aṁbigara Chauḍayya was a ferryman. There were also women such as Satyakka, Remmavve and Sōmavve with their respective vocations. It is interesting to know that all these have sung their vacanas. Thus Basava's advent marked a new beginning and a new stage in culture, in social reform and in religious awakening.

Though one may note that untouchability is on the decline, yet, in spite of Basava's efforts, the conditions in relation to caste are no better in this 20th century than in the 12th. True, our Constitution, in the year 1950, declared that it has secured justice, liberty, equality and fraternity to all citizens; and one may, therefore, hope that, in due course of time, this evil will be once and for all uprooted and the country will have a classless society where no one will ask about his or her caste or with whom he or she ate, thus leading to the realisation of the cherished goal of Lord Basava.

Basava, along with his work of social reform, preached and guided people in the religious sphere also. His life as a mystic is more pronounced. He was, in a true sense, a medieval prophet. To him, God Śiva was the Supreme Being, and Realisation, or becoming one with Him, was of supreme importance. He considered all human beings equal in the eye of God Śiva. All persons are equal in respect of their moral and spiritual development. Neither sex nor status in society would come in the way of moral and spiritual development. His vision of faith was a surrender to Śiva and he, therefore, preached strict adherence to Liṅga as a symbol of *discipleship*. To achieve this end in life, he showed the way through Aṣṭavaraṇa and Ṣaṭsthala.

Basava was truly a mystic in his approach to the realities. That is why he is called 'Bhakti Bhāṇḍāri', i.e., a treasure of Bhakti or devotion. His vacanas will bear testimony to this aspect of his life. What is Bhakti ? Is it something which can be judged by the norms of logic or tested by the process of reasoning ? Eminent scholars have explained what Bhakti means or what its significance is, but the one given by the Jesuit scholar is more apt. Says he:

> "The word Bhakti, generally translated as 'devotion', is rich with meaning, faith, love, loving surrender, devotional attachment, piety. It is clearly associated with the word Pooja which means adoration, reverence, worship. There is implied in these three words a very personal relation, a concrete and existential attitude of reverential dependence and piety."

God is, of course, the supreme object of Bhakti. This loving devotion, says the scholar, gives the Bhakta a much greater and more valuable knowledge of the Lord than any intellectual process of

reflection or meditation. Thus you will understand that a mystic is he who knows the Divine by his inner light or intuition. It is rather an experience than an article of faith. He believes that the highest in man can hold communion with the highest in the universe. Neither logic nor reasoning can test it. In fact, the belief starts where reason ends, i.e. the ending of the one is the beginning of the other, and that is why mystics are always regarded as those who speak from experience, itself incapable of examination. Basava's philosophical and ethical teachings as revealed in his vacanas are the result of his experience, belief and Bhakti.

The founding of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa is really an outstanding work of Lord Basava. It was a place where Vacanas were recited and philosophical discourses held. It was an assemblage of about 300 persons, both high and low, differing in race, creed and colour. All congregated for the purpose of spiritual knowledge; sat side by side at a common table, discussed their individual experiences, shared each other's views, acknowledged their faults, if any, being always more ready to learn from others than to teach. It was after such deliberations that they used to reach conclusions which are embodied in the work known as 'Sūnya Saṁpādane'. These conclusions were regarded as guiding principles to his followers, disciples and Śaraṇas, who used to carry them to the people and preach and guide them in their religious pursuits.

Nobody could envisage a more effective or a more democratic process of understanding each other's views than by the creation or formation of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa. Yet, the movement of the disciples or Śaraṇas was confined essentially to Karnāṭak, though we get some evidence that some of them went as far as Kashmir and Nepal and claimed many followers. But it is evident that because of a lack of missionary zeal on the part of the followers or disciples of Basava, Vīraśaivism could not cross the country's frontiers in spite of its universal, democratic and humanistic outlook, and remained confined to Karnāṭak. This is obvious if you look at other religions, such as Christianity which, on account of the zeal of the missionaries, spread westward, or Buddhism which, owing to the missionary zeal

of Emperor Aśoka and others, became the religion of the Far East and the South-East.

The present age is essentially an age of secularism, when men's minds are wholly turned earthwards and manwards by insisting upon and placing the progress of the human race and its achievements in the material fields as an immediate rule of earthly life. The pursuit of the spiritual path leading to the realisation of the Supreme Being is totally ignored. It is time, that mankind was reminded of this lapse. Basava's teachings in the 12th century hold good even in the 20th. It is but right that the Basava Samiti, believing as it does that Basava has a message for all the people, for all time and, therefore, for this age, has undertaken the task of drawing the attention of the world to the life, teachings and achievements of Lord Basava.

B. M. KALAGATE

SECTION : THREE

My father Thou, my mother too;
Thou also all my kith and kin...
Save Thou, no kindred is to me!
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord,
*Do with me as Thou please!**

THE BUDDHA AND ŚRĪ BASAVEŚVARA

The story of human civilization, as far as we can understand it, is essentially cyclic in nature. Whenever there have been crises of cultures resulting in clashes of ideas on the intellectual or the moral plane, great and original minds have tried to lift the decadent societies again to higher planes of existence. In ancient Greece, for instance, when Sophists had brought about great intellectual confusion and Protagoras reduced knowledge to subjective and personal opinion, Socrates came on the scene and tried to clear the elements of confusion by insisting on defining terms. Similarly, Kant brought about a Copernican revolution in philosophy by reconciling the rationalist and empiricist points of view. On the ethical and religious planes, Mahāvīra regenerated the Śramaṇa current of thought and revolted against sacrificial rites. When Hinduism faced the challenge of opposing schools of thought, Śaṅkarācārya made heroic efforts to revive and regenerate Hinduism by reaffirming the Advaita philosophy. The Buddha and Basava may, in a similar way, be described as architects of a better and higher society.

The Buddha and Basava, although sons of the same soil, were divided by a great stretch of time. In terms of geographical location, the Buddha belonged to the extreme north of India while Basava flourished in the south. One was born a prince and renounced the world on coming of age whereas the other born in a middle class family rose to be the minister of King Bijjaḷa. Basava came almost

seventeen centuries after the Buddha and had the advantage of a rich legacy of the past. The Buddha believed in intellectual enquiry, freedom of thought and action, and dignity of labour. Basava continued the Buddha's noble tradition in these respects.

The Buddha, among the Indian religious leaders, was unique in one respect. While he shunned metaphysics and speculative thought for its own sake, he enthroned reason. Reason constituted the very gist of Buddhism. The Buddha was, first and foremost, a rationalist. He was a philosopher in the true sense of the term, whereas Basava was essentially a social reformer; he was fundamentally a man of action. Unlike the Buddha, Basava was a religious leader who accepted the theistic tradition. He believed in the existence of God and the central tenet of his faith was self-surrender to God.

The Buddha's teaching was primarily ethical. He wanted to make men perfect. Among the religious thinkers of India, the Buddha was almost the first to realise the importance of practical ethics in personal as well as in social life. In fact, ethics was for him the main and fundamental basis of the good life, even as reason was the ultimate criterion of truth. Albert Schweitzer says[1] that the Buddha gave to India something it did not yet possess: an ethic derived from thought. In his first sermon at Benares, the Buddha preached his famous doctrine of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. The four noble truths (Āryasatyāni) are:

1. Misery — Dukkha
2. The cause of misery — Dukkha samudāya
3. The cessation of misery — Dukkha nirodha

and 4. The way to the cessation of misery — Dukkha nirodha mārga.

He wanted men to be free from misery, free from birth, old age, disease and death. Cessation of misery could be reached by the Eightfold Path — (1) right belief (Samyak Dṛṣṭi), (2) right aspiration (Samyak saṅkalpa), (3) right speech (Samyak vāk), (4) right action (Samyak karma), (5) right living (Samyak ājīva), (6) right effort (Samyak

1 Indian Thought and its Development — Wilco, 1960, p. 121.

vyāyāma), (7) right thought (Samyak smṛti), and (8) right tranquillity (Samyak samādhi).

The Buddha asked his disciples to avoid extremes. "Two extremes there are", he said, "We must strive to avoid extreme addiction to pleasure which is meaningless and worthless, and the extreme of self-mortification which is painful and fruitless." By applying both these principles, the Tathāgata arrived at the Middle Path (Madhyamapratipāda) which led to insight, to wisdom, to knowledge, to peace and to Nirvāṇa. The importance of the Buddha's teaching was to make men perfect and to free them from the wheels of saṁsāra. He was averse to metaphysical discussions. When questioned about the highest truths, like the immortality of the soul and the ultimate reality, he was silent, because, to him, such questions were not relevant for the purpose of a good and noble life.

To Basava, too, both asceticism and self-indulgence were equally bad. He showed by the example of his life that one can lead a life of non-attachment while living a full social and practical life. For him, mortification of the body as preached by the followers of the Śaiva cults like Kāpālika and Kāḷāmukha was a wrong way to the goal.

The Buddha gave importance to reason and discarded all dogma. He exhorted his disciples not to accept anything on the authority of other persons, howsoever highly placed, or of the scriptures. The Buddha said, "One must not accept my Dharma from reverence. First try it as gold is tested by fire." He also said, "Ānanda, I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrines; for, in respect of Dharma, Ānanda, the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who holds something back." "Therefore, Ānanda, be ye lamps unto yourselves, be ye refuge to yourselves. Hold fast as a refuge to the Dharma. Look not for refuge to anyone beside yourself."

The Buddha did not make a distinction between high and low. All men are equal, he said. Also, he never asserted the sinfulness and weaknesses of man. Rather, he inspired his followers with confidence in their innate goodness and strength. Salvation was

to be achieved not through the favour of a higher being but by self-vision and self-illumination.

Vīraśaivism is an expansion and development of Śaiva thought which is pre-Vedic in its origin. Before Basava came on the scene, the social and moral fabric of society in Karnāṭak had reached the lowest depths, thanks to the superstitious practices of the various prevalent cults. At this stage a prophet like Basava was needed; and he revitalised the Śaiva doctrine and regenerated the contemporary social and spiritual values on the lines of the true Śaiva thought.

Vīraśaivism, with Śakti as the essential force of Śiva, may be described as a special form of qualified monism (Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita). The fundamental principle of Vīraśaivism is twofold — Liṅga (Śiva) and Aṅga (self). The two principles are not distinct. But because of ignorance, we miss this identity and emphasize the difference which is true only on the practical level of existence. The removal of this ignorance leads to union with the Highest. This union is the ultimate goal of life — Liṅgāṅga Sāmarasya. This highest ideal is, normally, realised by stages. There are six stages of self-realisation (Ṣaṭsthalas). These stages form a ladder of ascent and are based on sound psychology, because one has to develop gradually before one can reach the highest stage of 'Aikya', the union with the universal principle.

Vīraśaivism also emphasized social ethics as a means to the realisation of the highest, the way to which lies through the five codes of conduct (Pañcācāras). There are other means to spiritual progress, and they are called Aṣṭāvaraṇas — eightfold aids.

The Buddha and Basava were great social reformers and democrats as is evidenced by the fact that both used the language of the common man *i.e.*, Pāli and Kannaḍa, respectively. This accounts for the fact that their teachings spread so extensively in such a short time. Both were intensely human, and yet, after his enlightenment, the Buddha knew he was no mere man. Once a Brāhmaṇa named Droṇa, seeing the Blessed One sitting at the foot of a tree, asked him: "Are you a Deva?" And the Exalted One answered: "I am not." "Are you a gandharva?" "I am

not." "Are you a yakṣa?" "I am not." "Are you a man?" "I am not a man." On the Brāhmaṇa asking what he might be, the Blessed one replied: "Those evil influences, those lusts, whose non-destruction would have individualised me as a Dēva, a gandharva, a yakṣa, or a man I have completely annihilated. Know, therefore, O Brāhmaṇa, that I am a Buddha." Basava never thought he was higher than other men. "enaginta kiriyarilla, Śiva Bhaktariginta hiriyarilla." 'No one is lesser than I; no one is greater than the Śaraṇa'.

The Buddha and Basava both emphasized the equality of men and women. All men were equal, and women had equal rights with men. Yet it is difficult to say whether the Buddha fully accepted the equality of women with men. When his maternal aunt, Prajāpati Gautami, was to be initiated into the Saṅgha, the Buddha was at first reluctant to take her in; and when he did agree, he said the Saṅgha would now live only 500 years instead of a thousand. Basava had more progressive ideas about the equality of women in all spheres of life. This is demonstrated by the full participation of women in the philosophical and spiritual discussions of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa. The discourses of Akka Mahādēvi are an outstanding example.

Both the Buddha and Basava believed in the dignity of labour. For them, work was worship. Basava said "Work is Worship" (Kāyakave Kailāsa). A cobbler (Ḍōhara Kakkayya), a woodcutter (Mōḷigeya Mārayya), and a boatman (Aṁbigara Cauḍayya) were members of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa, the highest spiritual congregation, and were highly respected by Basava and Allama Prabhu, the two great religious leaders.

"When Kakkayya the tanner my father is,
And Cennayya grandfather,
Am I not saved?
And then, if I have understood
The essence of devotion, it's
By Śvapacayya's grace.
I've had my birth
In this obnoxious caste:

O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord,
Is this my lot?"[2]

"O God, after adoring Thee,
The caste of Cenna changed to good!
O God, after adoring Thee,
The caste of Dāsa hath spread
All over the land!
O God, when Maḍivāḷa Mācayya had
Bowed Low to Thee,
He rose to be Thy śaraṇa!
What boundary is there, O Lord,
Unto the caste Thou lovest not?
'He who is dedicate
To Liṅga-worship, though he be
An outcaste, is an excellent sage;
Whereas a Brahmin void of it
Is but an outcaste' — this being so,
What means this high and lower caste?
It's he who does not say
'I salute Thee, O Unborn'
That is the low-born man!"[3]

"Vyāsa is a fisherman's son,
Mārkaṇḍēya of an outcaste born,
Maṇḍōdari the daughter of a frog!
O, look not for caste: in caste,
What were you in the past?
Indeed, Agastya was a fowler,
Durvāsa a maker of shoes,
Kasyapa a blacksmith;
The sage, Kauṇḍiṇya by name,
Was, as the three worlds know,
A barber ... Mark ye all, the words
Of our Kūḍala Saṅga run:
'What matters one is lowly-born?
Only a Śivabhakta is well born!'"[4]

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2 English rendering by A. Menezes and S. M. Angadi, Pub. Aṇṇana Baḷaga Sirigere, in press, v. 342

3 Ibid. v. 604

4 Ibid. v. 588

The Buddha and Basava may be said to have established new religious orders. The Buddha's Saṅgha was very important, and in the Buddhist form of worship, Saṅgha is included as one of the trinity — Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha. Basava started the 'Anubhava Maṇṭapa', which is unique in the history of religion. It is a kind of College devoted to discussion, contemplation and mystic experience. Indeed, this institution has its parallels in the early councils of Aśoka, or the Saṅgam of the Tamilians, or Janaka's parliament of religions in Upaniṣadic days, of the later parliament of religions of Akbar. But unlike these, it emphasised the importance of the practice of religion first and of discussion and theory next.

The Buddha accepted the ancient Indian theory of Karma. King Milinda wanted to know why there was inequality in status and quality among men — some were poor, some rich, some beautiful, others ugly. "Every living being", said the Tathāgata, "has Karma as its master, its inheritance, its congenital cause, its kinsman, its refuge. It is Karma that differentiates all beings into low and high states," (Milinda 65). Basava also accepted the fact of Karma operating in all human lives. Sañcita, Āgami and Prārabdha Karma follow man like a shadow. But both the Buddha and Basava accepted the possibility of mitigating and removing the effects of Karma by proper moral and spiritual practices. The Buddha, therefore, preached the Eightfold Path and Basava the Ṣaṭsthala.

The Buddha was compassion incarnate. Mettā (universal love), Karuṇā (compassion), Mudita (sympathetic joy), and Upekkhā (equanimity) are the four sentiments which know no bounds of time, space or class. The Buddha imbued the robber Angulimāla's mind with Mettā, and the robber was converted into a spiritual wayfarer.

Basava is also credited with having effected a similar change[5] of heart in persons habituated to evil ways. For instance, one night some thieves took away his cows, leaving the calves behind. When Basava came to know of the pitiable condition of the calves, he

5 Siṅgirāja Purāṇa, Chapter X, Ed. by H. Deveerappa, Mysore, 1950.

ordered the servants to take the calves to hand them over to the thieves so that they may join the cows. The servants obeyed the order. But the thieves were so moved by this extraordinary act of compassion that their conscience was touched and they became completely changed persons. They brought the cows and their calves back to Basava and begged to be excused. They became his staunch followers.

Albert Schweitzer says[6] that when the Buddha exalted compassionate love to the fundamental principle of morality, he breathed into Indian ethics a new breath of life. For Basava also, compassion was the very foundation of religion. By his preaching as well as actions, he showed that the good of the society and the salvation of man lay in the practice of compassion.

"What sort of religion can it be
Without compassion?
Compassion needs must be
Towards all living things;
Compassion is the root
Of all religious faith:
Lord Kūḍala Saṅga does not care
For what is not like this."[7]

The world-view envisaged by Buddha seems to be more intellectual and abstract and far beyond the reach of the common man. The system of monks started by him was concerned more with the conversion of the classes, in the belief that this process would automatically percolate down to the masses. History has shown that the common Buddhist remained as prone as ever to the worship of icons and images in the form of Avalōkitēśvara and other Bodhisattvas, with a complete mythology comparable to that of Hindu mythology. On the other hand, Basava streered clear of these pitfalls. His idea of Guru and Jaṅgama represents the highest form of spiritual enlightenment. Unlike the Buddha, Basava went to the masses and inspired them with his positive philosophy of *living* saints.

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6 Indian Thought and its Development — Wilco, 1960, page 121.
7 Vide foot note no. 2. v. 247.

Vīraśaiva history is primarily the record of men and women who lived a life of the highest sanctity. Astute psychologist that he was, Basava saw to it that religious fervour in graded measure was given a prominent place in one's life from the first moment of initiation up to the goal of Aikya, not ignoring at the same time one's social obligations. His theism is the most comprehensive variety of it's kind among the Indian religions.

In the history of human civilisation, we find that the quest for spiritual values has been persistent and continuous, although the approaches to it have been different. There is essential similarity in the fundamental principles enunciated by the Buddha and Basava. The Buddha took the extreme rationalist stand and exhorted men to reach a higher level of existence on their own with no help of divine grace. Basava was also a rationalist who revolted against the meaningless ritualistic practices and exploitation of the ignorant masses by the higher classes. But he accepted the existence of a God, and of divine grace as the way to salvation. The Buddha's ethics were primarily individual, while those of Basava were essentially social, though inclusive of personal perfection. However, accidents of history confined the teachings of Basava to a particular region, while those of the Buddha went beyond the confines of the land of his birth.

S. B. SHAPETI

Before the greyness touch your cheeck,
Before the wrinkles plough your face,
Before your body dwindles to
A nest of bones;
Before, with teeth all gone,
The back all bowed,
You are a burden to your kin;
Before you prop your legs with hands
And lean heavily upon a staff;
Before the lustre of your manhood fades;
Before you feel the touch of death,
Adore our Lord
Kūḍala Saṅgama !*

BASAVA AND MAHĀVĪRA

I

Vīraśaivism developed out of the Śaiva cult. Śaivism developed into two forms — the Liṅgāyat religion in Karnāṭak, and Kāshmir Śaivism in the North.[1] Vīraśaivism is a revived, regenerated and revolutionary form of Śaivism.[2] It is now agreed that Śaivism is a pre-Āryan religion. Its origins are lost in pre-history, but it is clear that the history of Śaivism is a blend of two lines of development, the Āryan and the pre-Āryan.[3]

Jainism is a pre-Āryan religion. The Jaina tradition traces Jainism to Ṛṣabha, the first tīrthaṅkara. His time is referred back to pre-history. The *Yajurveda* mentions Ṛṣabha, Ajita and Ariṣṭanemi as tīrthaṅkaras. *The Bhāgavata-purāṇa* endorses the view that Ṛṣabha was the founder of Jainism.[4] Jacobi has traced Jainism to early primitive currents of metaphysical speculation.[5] The people of Lacchavi, whom the Buddha referred to, had a republican form of Government, their own shrines and their non-Vedic worship. They patronised Jainism.[6]

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1 *Cultural Heritage of India* — Vol. IV-3 Historical sketch of Śaivism by Nilakantha Sastri.

2 Ibid, 5 Viraśaivism by His Holiness Kumarasvamy of Nava Kalyaṇamath.

3 Ibid, 3 articles by Nilakantha Sastri.

4 Radhakrishnan (S): *Indian Philosophy*. Vol. I, p. 237.

5 Jacobi (Hermann), *Studies in Jainism*, — Jainism.

6 *Modern Review:* 1929. p. 499.

It may be inferred, then, that Mahāvīra and Basava were not perhaps the founders of new religions. (But in case of Basava, however, there is a strong belief that he is the founder of Vīra-śaivism). They revived the traditions of their predecessors. In fact both of them presented and carried on the pre-Āryan Śramaṇa currents of thought, which were non-vedic in origin. Mahāvīra extended the teachings of Pārśva the 23rd tīrthaṅkara and Basava continued the śaiva thought.

II

In the Jaina literature Mahāvīra is described as a supreme personality, 'a great Brāhmaṇa', 'a great guardian', 'a great guide', 'a great teacher', and 'a great recluse'[7] In the Buddhist literature he is referred to as 'Nigganṭha Nātaputta'. He was born about 570 B.C. in the town of Kundanagrām a suburb of Vaiśāli and an important seat of Jñātṛkas. His parents belonged to the Jñāta Kṣatriyas and were lay worshippers of Pārśva. In his thirtieth year with the permission of the elders, he took to renunciation and became an ascetic. In the Ohāṇa-sutta of the Āyarāṅga there is a graphic description of his ascetic practices. After twelve years of meditation he attained omniscience (kēvala) and became a Jina or Arhat. Then he travelled about from place to place for thirty years and preached the doctrine. The places of his itinerary were Vaiśāli, Rājagṛha, Nīḷandā, Mithilā and others. And on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight of Kārtika in the last watch of the night, in the town of Pāvā the venerable ascetic died, cutting off the ties of birth, decay and death.[8] This was in the year 408 B.C. Among the immediate followers eleven became distinguished as Gaṇadharas. Indrashuti Gautama, Agnibhūti and Vāyubhūti were prominent among them. His teachings were recorded in twelve Aṅgas as Śruta jñāna, which were crystallised in Śatkhaṇḍāgama Karmaprabhṛta by Ācāryas, Puṣpadanta and Bhūtabali.

7 *Uvāsaga-dasā*.
8 *Jaina sūtras*, Part I, p. 264.

It is difficult to give an authentic and full picture of the life of Basavēśvara, although he lived comparatively in the recent past, 12th century A.D. We can collate information through the inscriptions, the Purāṇas and the vacanas of Basava. *Basavarāj Dēvara Ragaḷe* of Harihar, *Basava Purāṇa* of Bhīma Kavi and *Bijjaḷāṅka carite* of Dharaṇi Paṇḍita are helpful for this purpose. He was born in 1131 A.D. at Bāgewāḍi known as Iṅgaḷēśvara Bāgewāḍi. His father Mādarasa belonged to the Kāsyapa gōtra. His mother Mādalāṁbike was a pious lady. At the age of about ten, Basavēśvara came to the sacred place of Kūḍala Saṅgama. There he studied under a guru. Later he joined the court of King Bijjaḷa, at Kalyāṇa, and rose to the position of Minister.

Basava's hunger and thirst for righteousness was infinite. Harihara describes a significant incident in the spiritual life of Basava, that at Kappaḍi Saṅgama he realised spiritual awareness and the direction of the divine command to go to Bijjaḷa's court for the upliftment of the people. There, besides administering justice to the people, he started his spiritual movement as expressed in the devotion to Śiva. He tried to remove social and political ineuuality, regarding both the high and the low with the same affection and respect. That perhaps brought a crisis in society. Basava was pained to see the wide spread use of violence in society inspite of his preaching non-violence throughout his life, and left Kalyāṇa for Kappaḍi Saṅgama. In 1167 A.D. he breathed his last. Here we are reminded of Gandhiji's agony in the last days of his life when he saw his own men excelling in brutality during the communal riots in 1948.

Without entering into the contraversies of the life incidents of Basava we can say that Basava was a social reformer, a great administrator, humanist, a spiritual leader and in fact a prophet. He strove, like all other prophets, to lighten the burden of suffering humanity and make this earth a heaven for men.

III

The teachings of Mahāvīra give prominence to the purity of the soul and the need of the efforts to free the souls from the wheel of saṁsāra. Mokṣa is the ultimate end of life. It is realised by the threefold path: right intuition (Samyag darśana); right knowledge (Samyag jñāna) and right conduct (Samyag cāritra).[9]

Jīvas are substances distinct from matter. They are considered from two points of view — the noumenal (Miścaya naya) and the phenomenal (Vyavahāra naya). From the noumenal point of view the soul is pure and perfect. From the phenomenal point of view, it is the lord, the agent and the enjoyer of the fruits of karma. Jīva gets experiences owing to its contact with the environment. It accumulates karma on account of its activity. As a consequence it gets entangled in the wheel of saṁsāra. This entanglement is beginningless, though it has an end.

This bondage of the soul to karma is of four types, according to nature (prakṛti), duration (sthiti), intensity (anubhāga, rasa) and quantity (pradeśa).[10]

The goal, therefore, is to seek freedom from the miseries of this life, to seek deliverance. But the path to mokṣa is long and difficult. We have to free ourselves from the karma that has already been accumulated and to see that no new karma is added. The soul gets bound by the constant flow of karma. This is called bandha. But the first step to the realisation of the self is to see that all channels through which karma has been flowing have been stopped so that no additional karma can accumulate. This is saṁvara.

The next important task is to remove the karma that has already accumulated. The destruction of karma is called nirjarā. The way to mokṣa is long and arduous. On its way to self-realization, the soul has to go through fourteen stages of spiritual development. They are called *Guṇasthānas*. The aim is to reach Samyaktva and finally attain mokṣa.

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9 *Tattvārtha Sūtra*, I. 1.

10 *Karma Grantha*, 3.2.

Mokṣa is to be achieved through right intuition (Samyag darśana), right knowledge (Samyag jñāna) and the practice of right conduct (Samyag cāritra). The belief in the tattva is the right faith; knowledge of the real is the right knowledge, while freedom from both attachment and aversion is right conduct. The path of virtue is the path which leads to self-realisation.

Jainism emphasizes voluntary effort. One is responsible for one's salvation. No god nor any angel, can help us and lift us to salvation. There is no place for divine grace in Jainism.

Life is to be considered as struggle for perfection. Jainism looks at life as a 'vale of soul making'. In this sense the Jaina outlook is not pessimistic, though darker side of this life is emphasized as a means to higher end of self-realization. The Jaina outlook is fundamentally melioristic.

Basava's teachings are primarily ethical. His aim was to make men good and happy, to turn them towards the attainment of spiritual perfection through the practice of social virtues. Vīraśaivism is a monistic philosophy wherein the identity of the individual and the Absolute is emphasised. It is a dynamic philosophy charged with dynamic non-dualistic thought (Śakti viśiṣṭādvaita).

Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita accepts the reality of the Brahman, the soul and the world. Soul is pure, self-conscious and self-luminous. It is knower (jñāta), the doer (kartā) and the enjoyer (bhoktā). Śiva himself bifurcates into liṅga and aṅga. The Jīva becomes saṅkucita (limited) due to three types of taints (malas). Liberation can be attained by right knowledge and right practice. There is, in Vīraśaivism, a synthesis of the ways of knowledge (jñāna), devotion (Bhakti) and action (Kāyaka). The highest end is the union of aṅga with liṅga, the union of man and god considered from the actual plane. Basava's teachings emphasize right action. The concept of Pañcācāra is important in this connection. Pañcācāras are the five ways of conduct, the Liṅgācāra as worship of Iṣṭaliṅga expresses a mental preparation of the devotee for spiritual development. Sadācāra enjoins us to be disciplined in our vocation and do our duties assigned to us. Keeping in view the spiritual responsibilities

of a layman Śivācāra enjoins us to worship the Śiva as the one God. It is monotheistic. Bhṛtyācāra is the devotee's attitude of humility towards Śiva and his devotees. And Gaṇācāra emphasises the social aspect of virtues.

Vīraśaivism gives aid to the spiritual development in the Aṣṭāvaraṇa. The eight-fold aids in the form of guru, liṅga, jaṅgama, pādōdaka, prasāda, bhasma, rudrākṣa and mantra prepare the mind of a devotee to rise gradually to the higher stage of spiritual development. In this sense it has a great psychological significance.

On the metaphysical plane, the supreme Śiva is unlimited, but the inherent energy of the Divine brings about its own limitation. The Highest Principle bifurcates itself into liṅga and aṅga. The evolution of the world proceeds along this line, called pravṛtti mārga. On the ethical plane, the individual soul desires development. This is the 'nivṛtti mārga'. The Ṣaṭsthala gives the ethical and the spiritual progress of the individual along the path of self-realization.

The empirical individual is steeped in the saṁsāra. Ignorance possesses him. This ignorance or avidyā veils from him the right knowledge about the spiritual world, as dark clouds obstruct our view of the sun. All his energies are concentrated on worldly objects. Then suddenly and perhaps miraculously, there dawns the idea that the material objects are not all, and that there is a 'divinity that shapes our ends'. This awareness induces the individual to strive to know about it. This is the beginning of self-realization, and the beginning of the ṣaṭsthala. The six stages of self-realization are: (1) bhakta sthala, the stage of a devotee; (2) maheśa sthala, the stage of confidence in spiritual realization; (3) prāsādi sthala, the stage of a higher individual; (4) prāṇaliṅgi sthala, the stage of a lesser divinity; (5) śaraṇa sthala, the stage of a purified soul; and (6) aikya sthala, the stage of union. Ṣaṭsthala is the path 'which enables man to fulfil the command of Christ: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your father who in heaven is perfect". And this path which involves a spiritual psychological discipline is termed yoga,

and the path which is characterised by six stages is, in Vīraśaivism, called Ṣaṭshtala-yoga.[11]

Basava's contribution to philosophy and the spiritual realisation of the people of his time is in the establishment of the '*Anubhava Maṇṭapa.*' It is the Academy of saints where each one tried to realise the infinite through spiritual experience. The members of the Academy helped each other in their spiritual progress and social reform. "This Institution reminds us of the early councils of Aśoka, or the saṅgam of the Tamilians, or the parliament of religions of Janaka of the Upaniṣadic days, of the later parliament of religions of Akbar. But unlike these it inverted the order of procedure of the theory and practice of religion. In short this movement may be said to be somewhat unique in the religious history of India.[12]

IV

It is difficult to give a comparative picture of Mahāvīra and Basava. Prophets cannot be compared. They have their own individuality and special mission to fulfil. Prophets come when mankind needs them, when a decadent society stands just at the brink of extinction. In the 6th century B. C. there was intellectual confusion. There was moral decay and prevalence of pseudo spiritualism of sacrificial worship. As a consequence several schools of thought sprang up. In the *Brahmajālasatta* there is mention of sixty four schools of thought prevailing in this state of intellectual confusion. To save philosophy and life from this impasse Mahāvīra adopted a synoptic view of life. We should realise that Reality is complex and life is a many-coloured dome. Idealism is unable to see the trees in the wood and empiricism cannot see the wood in the trees. These were the two ways of approaching the Truth. But they are not the only two ways, nor were the approaches absolute. This

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11 Shri Kumaraswamiji: *The Vīraśaiva Philosophy and Mysticism*, p. 164.

12 Rev. C. D. Uttangi: *Anubhava Maṇṭapa* (Smt. Mahantiah H. R. Dharwar, 1962) p. 28.

is the synoptic outlook. In this sense philosophy is to see life steadily and to see it whole. And Mahāvīra emphasised the synoptic outlook, the anekānta view.

In the *Bhagvatī sūtra*, there is a dialogue between Mahāvīra and his disciple Gautama.

"Are the souls, O Lord, eternal or non-eternal?"

"The souls are eternal in some respects and non-eternal in some other respects".... "They are eternal, O Gautama, from the point of view of substance and non-eternal from the point of view of modes."

Again, the problem of body and mind was answered by Mahāvīra as — "The body, O Gautama, is indentical with the soul and not identical with the soul in different respects."[13]

Basava, like the Buddha, eschewed metaphysics and concentrated in making this life good as far as possible. He, like Mahāvīra, was aware, that the life in this world is not the end nor is it the good spiritual development. We are caught in the wheel of saṁsāra.[14] and we are living under the frightening shadow of a serpent.[15] The Jaina description of saṁsāra as frightful and uncertain yet attractive to the uninitiated is significiant.

The soul wanders in the wheel of saṁsāra from life to life due to the accumulation of karma. Basava also says that this life is the effect of karma.[16] Karma cannot leave us free,[17] and we cannot escape the effects of karma.[18] It is not possible for the wise or a fool to be free from the accumulated karma without exhausting the experience of its fruits.[19] Yet it is possible to be liberated from karma. Mahāvīra gave prominence to self-effort. There is no place for grace of God in Jainism. Basava, however, emphasizes, in addition to moral life, surrender to God which would free us from the wheel

13 *Bhagvatī Sūtra*, VII. 2, 273 and XIII, 7, 495.
14 Vacanas of Basava, 3.13
15 Ibid. 3. 11
16 Ibid. 3. 19
17 Ibid. 107.
18 Ibid. 177
19 Ibid. 773

of saṁsāra.[20] It is possible to purify karma by our actions and in the company of the great (Śaraṇas).[21] And therefore awake, arise and surrender to God with devotion.[22]

Mahāvīra wanted to free men from the wheel of saṁsāra and to lead them to mokṣa. Mokṣa is self-realization and the self to be realised is the transcendental self. In the state of mokṣa the soul reaches its state of perfection and lives eternally in the Siddhaśilā. There, however, each soul retains its individuality and is not merged in any orther higher Being. But for Basava and Vīraśaivism, the highest end is the union of the soul with the highest. The individual and Absolute are one. It is the fusion of the 'aṅga' with the 'liṅga.' The insistence of the centrality of Jīva, as in Jainism is an important feature of Śaivism. It accepts nondualism[23] of essence.

Yet at the empirical level we can enjoy the bliss of the highest end by doing our duty. In fact Basava impressed on the people the importance of work however low it is. He railed against the distinction between castes and classes. All men are equal and no work is low. Work is worship. Heaven is there with him who works, (Kāyakave kailāsa). God is there with the tiller tilling the hard ground and the path-maker breaking stones. Basava envisaged an organic relation between artha and ātman, between the economic and the spiritual values. He was the first to preach that poverty is not a spiritual sin but a social evil.[24]

This world is a vale of soul making. It is the house that expresses the will of the Master. And one who does not fare well in this world is not fit for the other world.[25]

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20 Ibid. 141.

21 Ibid. 773.

22 Ibid.

23 Buddha and Basava: p. 159.

24 Śrī Kumāraswmiji of Navakalyanamath: *Buddha and Basava* (Navakalyanamath, Dharwar), p. 112.

25 "Martyalōkaveṁbudu Kartārana Kammaṭavayyā;
Illi salluvavaru alliyū salluvaryyā;
Illi salladavaru alliyū sallarayyā".

Considered from the historical perspective, Mahāvīra and Basava had their missions in life in the social contexts they lived. The good of the suffering humanity was the common goal of both, compassion for mankind was their prime motive. Mahāvīra strove to free men from the wheel of life and to lead them to salvation. Samyakcāritra (good conduct) was a necessary way to salvation. In this sense he was first a transcendentalist and then a humanist.

Basava aimed at salvation, perfecting men in their life, thereby leading them to salvation. He wanted first to humanise men and then to divinise them. In this sense he was first a humanist and then a transcendentalist.

When mankind suffers, prophets come. Mahāvīra and Basava were the prophets of their age who worked in their own way for ennobling the souls and uplifting human beings from the mire of misery. They worked in the context of their social setting. So did the Buddha, Jesus and Gandhi.

T. G. KALGHATGI

BASAVA AND CONFUCIUS

No book on Hinduism is complete and comprehensive if it does not include the study of Vīraśaivism as one of the important religions of India. Vīraśaivism has its own records of growth, influence, degeneration and rejuvenation like all other religions such as, Jainism, Buddhism, Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism etc. Indeed the bright pages of the history of Vīraśaivism are those which tell us of Śivaśaraṇas, "Exemplars of perfect life," whose daily task was to lift man and society to the moral plane in the light of their knowledge of reality.

It is an arduous, if not an impossible, task to deal with all the Śivaśaraṇas here except with one — Basava, on account of his excellence in thought, word as well as deed comparing him with Confucius the "Renowned sage of China".

Basava and Confucius were great saints, statesmen and social reformers. They hailed from different parts of the globe: India and China respectively. Basava belongs to the twelfth century while Confucius appeared in the 6th century B. C. described as "The era which witnessed so mighty an awakening of religious thought and activity".[1]

Basava was a religious reformer and an egregious leader of Vīraśaiva movement. He exposed the drawbacks and foibles of the people of his days and set forth high ideals for the guidance of mankind. Confucius likewise spearheaded a similar movement in China but

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1 Charles T. Gorham, *Ethics of Great Religions*, p. 46, (1909.)

Confuciansim neither constituted a monastic order like Vīraśaivism, nor formed a priestly order like Christianity. In many ways it can be considered to be more an ethical system than a religion.

Basava and Confucius were men of outstanding intellect, lofty moral and social ideals. They were men of wisdom, courage, conviction and compassion. They were besides great literary figures. Basava is known to millions as a "Treasure-house of devotion" on account of his unswerving faith and unsurpassed devotion to God. Speaking of himself Confucius said "As to being a Divine Sage or even a good man, far be it from me to make any such claim." One of the four books of the Confucian canon, Analects, contains this sentence. Among the titles which the later Emperors conferred on him were—Divine Sage, the first Holy one and Universal Father. Both were ardent advocates of Humanism which embodies one of the lofty ideals that a person can find his fulfilment in the very act of serving and helping others. They were both champions of "Altruism" or "Jen."

Basava and Confucius were of unblemished character. They were celebrated moral teachers who profoundly influenced human thought and living by the force of their intellectual gifts, moral excellence, and sincerity of purpose.

Thus we find that, though Basava and Confucius belonged to different countries and different centuries they had almost identical qualities. Significantly enough they were men of identical mission, *i.e.*, to promote the welfare of the people in general. As Basava has expressed so feelingly in one of his prayers:

"Oh Lord do not subject me to the sin of considering myself of a superior caste. Man is to work not for his own benefit but for the good of the community as a whole."[2]

The teachings of Basava and Confucius are comprehensive. They comprise almost all aspects of life such as political, religious, social and moral. It is hardly possible to dwell upon all of these here. The only possible and safe course, would be to deal at length

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2 Wadia (A.R.), Religion as a Quest for Values, 160, University of Calcutta 1950.

with one significant aspect of their teachings. Accordingly I have chosen to consider the moral aspect of their teachings as the subject matter of this paper.

Basava and Confucius were two of the few great men who struggled and sought after the happiness of mankind. They had a deep conviction born of their rich and varied experiences that, the happiness of the people did depend not only upon the material prosperity but also upon the moral progress of the people. There must be perfect concord between things material and moral. Otherwise mere material prosperity would be a store of human miseries and griefs rather than a source of happiness and satisfaction. With this deep conviction Basava and Confucius directed their efforts to raise the moral standard of the people of their respective countries, where moral standards had degenerated to a very great extent.

Basava and Confucius were not mere speculative thinkers. They were practical moralists who moralised the populace not only by their precepts and writings but also by themselves living up to their preachings. It is proper, therefore, to praise them as celebrated moral teachers and heed their moral teachings.

The Teachings of Basava have come down to us in the form of vacanas. The vacanas of all the Śivaśaraṇas together constitute the bulwark of "The scripture of Liṅgāyat Faith". They are written in Kannaḍa language. They are simple, graceful and attractive. The Śaraṇas have sung freely and eloquently their reflections about God, the world, man and their interrelations. The vacanas embody rich religious experiences and ennobling moral insight of the Śivaśaraṇas. They are the sources of moral strength and courage. They serve as guide posts for man in his passage to the Eternal from the ephemeral. Regarding the vacanas, it is said, "There is no other literature a genre quite like vacana sāhitya. The nearest approximations would be the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, the Sayings of Confucius, Thomas a Kempis' Imitation of Christ, and Tagore's Gitanjali."[3]

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3 S. S. Basawanal and K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Musings of Basava, p. 36 (1940).

Thus from the standpoint of the subject matter, lucidity, simplicity, charm of style and the depth of meaning the vacanas deserve to be reckoned as classics and rightly regarded as treasures of religious thought, whose teachings are as valuable as those of "The Upaniṣads" and "The Bhagvadgītā."

The teachings of Confucius are in the form of "Aphorisms" or "Moral maxims." The book "Analects" attributed to him is a collection of moral maxims. The "Analects" has been described as the "Confucian Bible."

The moral teachings of Basava and Confucius have not come down to us in a systematic form. Statements relating to their ethical teachings are to be gleaned from the vacanas of Basava and likewise from the works of Confucius respectively and arranged in a systematic manner. However a careful perusal of their teachings will reveal the following essential characteristics.

In the first place, their teachings are simple, homely, attractive and practical.

Secondly, their teachings lay steadfast emphasis on good life. In other words, for both Basava and Confucius the measure of life is not "how long" but "how good". What is remarkable here is that, Basava and Confucius while laying strong emphasis on the purity of life, have not ignored the fundamental nature and needs of human life. This is perhaps partly one of the reasons for the appealing nature of their teachings.

Thirdly, their teachings are marked by originality not only in thought but in language as well. For example, the dignity and divinity of manual labour which have been brought home to us by Basava and his thought of elevating the status of women to the rank of men bear ample testimony to his originality of thought. In the matter of language the vacanas of Basava have struck a new path in the history of Kannaḍa literature.

Further, with regard to the originality of the thought of Confucius, it may be said that, his teaching "Do not unto others what you would not they should do unto you" and the idea that, "If a sage and a sovereign could be combined in one person, the difficulties of ruling

the empire would disappear,"[4] is sufficient enough to convince us of his originality of thought.

Hitherto we were engaged in knowing the personalities of Basava and Confucius, the forms in which their teachings have come down to us and the essential characteristics of their teachings. We shall now dwell upon their moral teachings.

Basava and Confucius were prophets of Humanism. Like all great religious prophets of the world, they too have accorded a place of supreme importance to the cultivation of ethical or moral life. Two important reasons may however be adduced as to why they gave supreme importance to the cultivation of moral life.

First, Basava and Confucius, were firmly convinced of the fact that, without a moral basis social solidarity could not be gained.

Second, the ultimate goals they have placed before mankind, though different, are such that, they cannot be attained without moral purity: purity in thought, in word as well as in deed.

Naturally therefore emphasis on the cultivation of moral life should receive its due recognition in their systems.

Morality always refers to an Ultimate goal or an Ideal to be realised. Therefore our consideration of the moral teachings of Basava and Confucius should better be begun with the discussion of the Ultimate goals they have placed before mankind.

According to Basava "Communion with God" or Unity with the Deity is the Supreme or Ultimate goal of human life. It can be attained here, on this earth during one's life by undivided devotion to God, by treading the path of rectitude and by dedicated service to one's fellow men without fostering any invidious distinctions between man and man.

It should be remembered that, Basava like the Buddha never exhorted the people desirous of Salvation to practise asceticism or renounce the world. On the contrary Basava insisted on our living a day-to-day life righteously and harmoniously with others in society. In other words, for attaining emancipation, it is not at all necessary

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4 Shri Kumaraswamiji, Buddha and Basava, p. 193 (1958).

Thus from the standpoint of the subject matter, lucidity, simplicity, charm of style and the depth of meaning the vacanas deserve to be reckoned as classics and rightly regarded as treasures of religious thought, whose teachings are as valuable as those of "The Upaniṣads" and "The Bhagvadgītā."

The teachings of Confucius are in the form of "Aphorisms" or "Moral maxims." The book "Analects" attributed to him is a collection of moral maxims. The "Analects" has been described as the "Confucian Bible."

The moral teachings of Basava and Confucius have not come down to us in a systematic form. Statements relating to their ethical teachings are to be gleaned from the vacanas of Basava and likewise from the works of Confucius respectively and arranged in a systematic manner. However a careful perusal of their teachings will reveal the following essential characteristics.

In the first place, their teachings are simple, homely, attractive and practical.

Secondly, their teachings lay steadfast emphasis on good life. In other words, for both Basava and Confucius the measure of life is not "how long" but "how good". What is remarkable here is that, Basava and Confucius while laying strong emphasis on the purity of life, have not ignored the fundamental nature and needs of human life. This is perhaps partly one of the reasons for the appealing nature of their teachings.

Thirdly, their teachings are marked by originality not only in thought but in language as well. For example, the dignity and divinity of manual labour which have been brought home to us by Basava and his thought of elevating the status of women to the rank of men bear ample testimony to his originality of thought. In the matter of language the vacanas of Basava have struck a new path in the history of Kannaḍa literature.

Further, with regard to the originality of the thought of Confucius, it may be said that, his teaching "Do not unto others what you would not they should do unto you" and the idea that, "If a sage and a sovereign could be combined in one person, the difficulties of ruling

the empire would disappear,"[4] is sufficient enough to convince us of his originality of thought.

Hitherto we were engaged in knowing the personalities of Basava and Confucius, the forms in which their teachings have come down to us and the essential characteristics of their teachings. We shall now dwell upon their moral teachings.

Basava and Confucius were prophets of Humanism. Like all great religious prophets of the world, they too have accorded a place of supreme importance to the cultivation of ethical or moral life. Two important reasons may however be adduced as to why they gave supreme importance to the cultivation of moral life.

First, Basava and Confucius, were firmly convinced of the fact that, without a moral basis social solidarity could not be gained.

Second, the ultimate goals they have placed before mankind, though different, are such that, they cannot be attained without moral purity: purity in thought, in word as well as in deed.

Naturally therefore emphasis on the cultivation of moral life should receive its due recognition in their systems.

Morality always refers to an Ultimate goal or an Ideal to be realised. Therefore our consideration of the moral teachings of Basava and Confucius should better be begun with the discussion of the Ultimate goals they have placed before mankind.

According to Basava "Communion with God" or Unity with the Deity is the Supreme or Ultimate goal of human life. It can be attained here, on this earth during one's life by undivided devotion to God, by treading the path of rectitude and by dedicated service to one's fellow men without fostering any invidious distinctions between man and man.

It should be remembered that, Basava like the Buddha never exhorted the people desirous of Salvation to practise asceticism or renounce the world. On the contrary Basava insisted on our living a day-to-day life righteously and harmoniously with others in society. In other words, for attaining emancipation, it is not at all necessary

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4 Shri Kumaraswamiji, Buddha and Basava, p. 193 (1958).

to run away from society. The "Supreme goal" of life can be realised by remaining in the society leading the ordinary every day life. For, society is created by God and therefore it would not come in the way of God-realisation provided our conduct in society is in tune with the religious, social and moral demands of the society.

According to Confucius the Ultimate goal of human life is not "Communion with God." Since Confucius unlike Basava did not countenance the theory of personal God, we cannot say that Confucius held "Communion with God" as the Supreme end of life. Confucius was "One who, like Buddha, dismissed from thought all theories of a personal God, all expectations of the soul's immortality."[5]

What then is the Ultimate goal of human life proclaimed by Confucius?

Development of one's own nature to the highest level of perfection of which it is capable is indeed the "Supreme end of life." "Rest in the highest or cease only when the acme is reached", is the noble warning note of Confucianism.

Let me make this point clear. Confucius holds that man's nature is basically good. Because it is gifted by Heaven. To do good is innate in man's nature. Since his nature is disposed towards goodness, man must freely let his nature to develop to its highest state of perfection on right lines. To allow one's nature not to develop to its highest state of perfection is to go against one's own nature which is pernicious. Man in order to reach the highest state of perfection needs neither the help of Heaven nor renunciation of the world as Lao-tze preached. Man can climb the pinnacle of perfection by following the path of virtue and by harmoniously living in society according to its expectations.

Thus from what has been stated above, one can understand clearly that, Basava and Confucius differed from each other in respect of the Ultimate goal of human life to be realised. Speaking from the standpoint of Basava, the Ultimate goal of human life suggested by Confucius, namely, "Highest perfection" can never be more than an

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5 Charles, T. Gorham, Ethics of Great Religions, p. 46 (1909).

indispensable means for the attainment of "Communion with God." However it is significant to note that, neither "Communion with God" nor the "Highest perfection" can be attained without moral discipline. These are the Ultimate goals which Basava and Confucius have placed before men urging them to live soley for their realisation, and when realised human life would be noble, blessed and blissful.

For realising these Ultimate goals men should deliberately choose the path of righteousness and purify themselves from without and within. Verily the path is hard to tread. Both Basava and Confucius were alive to it. But, except through this path of virtue one can hardly attain the Ultimate goal. "It will be easier for the camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for the unrighteous man to enter the Kingdom of God."[6]

Both Basava and Confucius were strongly convinced of the sanctity and efficacy of the righteous path in creating social solidarity and in leading men unfailingly to their cherished Ultimate ends. Therefore, they, at the outset, undertook to train the people morally to create social order, to promote peace and happiness and thereby provide every one with a strong and sure basis for realising the "Summum Bonum" of life.

For the sake of clarity and convenience the ethical teachings of Basava and Confucius may be brought under the following heads.

I. Right Faith

Right faith means faith in the existence of either the "Moral order" or God as the "Moral judge." Without faith in either, our moral life cannot be initiated at all and can have no meaning. Faith in the moral order or God is the primary requisite of moral life. Therefore Basava advised the people to have infinite faith in God and devotion to Him who resides in the hearts of all. According to Basava He is no other than Lord Śiva. Even our worship without faith and devotion to Him would be futile. Basava declares,

"But empty of faith or love,
they that call upon Thee,

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6 Mahadevan (T.M.P.), Outlines of Hinduism, page 16.

Shall surely sink in the pit of doom
Says, My Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama." [7]

Basava's conception of God is monotheistic. Next to faith and devotion to God one should have reverential faith in the words of the Jaṅgamas and elders.

Confucius did not, like Basava, encourage faith in God. But instead of, he had great faith in the "Moral Order" and advised the people to have faith in the same. He frequently referred to "Heaven's Decree" in his talks. The attitude of Confucius towards God is somewhat sceptical. However, Confucius insisted that men should cherish faith in and fear of the existence of the "Supreme moral order."

II (a) Right Aspiration

Right aspiration means longing to live for a nobler cause. Basava and Confucius themselves lived for the nobler cause of humanity. They strongly warned us against seeking and living for small advantages of life. It is in keeping with human nature and dignity to live for something better, nobler and something which is beneficial to the human society at large. Our desires must always be for what is good. "He who constantly seeks for small advantages never attains great things" says Confucius. Thus our aspirations should be of the right sort.

To have right aspirations is not sufficient enough. They must be expressed in right speech and right action.

(b) Right Speech

Love of truth has been the badge of saints and seers of the world. To be morally good is always to be true in speech and action. Even under gravest circumstances, one should not deviate from what is right and true. "We ought not to resort to a lie" says Gandhiji. Basava and Confucius were lovers of truth. They emphasised speaking the truth always in their teachings.

Further right speech means abstaining from backbiting, harsh language, frivolous talk, slandering and cheating etc. Basava equated

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7 Sunderaraj Theodore (A) and Devendra Kumar Hakari, Thus Spake Basava, v. 7 (1965).

truth with heaven. The following vacana of his bears testimony to this:

"There is no Heaven distinct from this Earth. Truth is Heaven. Falsehood is the base mortal world. Right conduct is Heaven and evil conduct is Hell. O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama, you are the Eternal witness."[8]

Confucius holds that, love of truth is innate in man. To utter falsehood is to oppose one's own nature and thereby invite dangers. Such a person is not moral. So we should always "abstain from falsehood, abstain from backbiting, abstain from harsh language and abstain from frivolous talk." This is right speech.

(c) *Right Actions*

To speak what is right and not to express it by way of action is a great moral cowardice. There should be concord between right speech and action. Right actions consist in doing morally pure deeds.

Right actions according to both Basava and Confucius are those which are animated by what is just and right, love and sympathy, while actions actuated by the feelings of selfishness, egoism, anger, lust etc., are wrong ones. In other words actions which can promote healthy human relationships and are mutually beneficial may be called right actions.

Basava and Confucius were convinced to the core that, evil actions are not only detrimental to the progress of human society but also to the development of the agent himself. "The social order depends upon fundamental morality—morality of proper words and actions."[9] Stealing, killing, debauchery, idling and even begging etc. are all evil actions. Basava always condemned a person having these qualities as "Holeya" which means an out-caste. Confucius called them "Inferior men".

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8 Mañjappa Harḍēkar (M), Social Structure of the Vīraśaiva Saints, preface page (iii). (1940)

9 Floyd. Ross (H) and Tynette Hills, The Great Religions by which Men Live p. 90 (1956).

III. Right Living

Right speech and right actions pave the way for right living. Right living means earning one's livelihood by the sweat of one's brow. Basava allowed no person to remain idle. He condemned in bitter language begging and parasitism.

According to him every person must pursue some occupation or be engaged in some kind of work suitable to his temperament. The real lesson imparted to us by Basava here is "Self-reliance."

Basava made no distinction between one kind of occupation and another. He valued all occupations and placed them on equal footing provided they are necessary, socially beneficial and morally worthy. The real insight and greatness of Basava consists, however, not only in placing all occupations on the same footing but in giving all occupations a religious significance, proclaiming that salvation cannot be attained except through some occupation or industry and hard work done with the spirit of detachment to the fruits thereof.

Like Basava Confucius bitterly opposed indolence. In the opinion of Confucius gamblers are better than idlers. "Even gamblers do something and to that degree are better than these idlers."[10] Confucius views that "Work is not a curse. It is life's greatest blessing." Therefore he encouraged the people with all sincerity to engage themselves in doing some useful work to society and not to look forward to a day when they might be free from labour.

Thus both Basava and Confucius loved labour and encouraged the people to work hard and earn their living. But it is important to note that, Confucius unlike Basava did not link his conception of work with the conception of Salvation. Nor did he ask his people to work with the spirit of detachment to the fruits thereof.

The reason for not linking the conception of labour with the conception of Salvation by Confucius is, that Confucius had no idea of Salvation. To quote the words of MacWeber in support of it, "Confucian ethic, of course, had no idea of Salvation. The Confucian

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10 Creel (H.G.), Chinese Thought, p. 30, (1960).

had no desire to be 'Saved' either from the migrations of souls or from punishment in the beyond. Both ideas were unknown to Confucianism."[11] This indeed marks the great difference between the ethics of Basava and that of Confucius.

Right Attitude

Basava and Confucius valued conduct more than any thing else. Accordingly they laid strong emphasis on right conduct in their teachings.

Our conduct is greatly determined by our attitudes. Attitudes are the actual motives of conduct. Out conduct is right or wrong, good or bad according as our attitudes are right or wrong, good or bad respectively. In order that our conduct has to be right we must harbour right attitudes and eschew wrong ones.

Basava and Confucius were deeply convinced that right and proper attitudes are necessary for right and proper conduct. Therefore, they insisted that men should develop right attitudes. The attitudes of love, sympathy, benevolence, kindness, tolerance and mercy etc., are right ones which we should earnestly foster.

In conclusion it may be said that, our age is an age of science. Much importance is given to the development of scientific outlook. Science of course is necessary; its outlook and methods are useful for our material progress. But material progress alone will not make us happy unless we give equal importance to our moral progress. The teachings of illustrious saints like Basava and Confucius are of immense use to our moral progress. Let us, therefore, rightly resolve to enshrine in our hearts their teachings and earnestly cultivate them in our every day life.

G. N. RECHANNA

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11 MaxWebber, The Religion of China, p. 156 (1959).

Gazing at the soaring palmyra tops
with eagerness intense,
I but feel the aches in my bones.
Vaulting ambitions all
higher still and higher
soar me aloft for a time —
then frustrate me entire.
Desires are mere heart-aches,
they must weaken and crush me ...
unless you help me achieve them,
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama!

BASAVA AND CHRIST

It is part of man's never-say-die optimism to believe that the night is darkest before the dawn; that, when things are at their worst, a saint or prophet appears, or is sent, to save mankind. Sometimes, however, the prophet turns out to be a false prophet; and when the true prophet comes, he is not recognised, and so is hounded out or crucified. Similar circumstances seem to have prevailed about the time that Christ and Basava were to appear. They were times, generally, of universal peace, or lull in a continuous war. And they were times, too, when religion had been emptied of all truth and degenerated into a meaningless formalism. There was a kind of stillness in the air, a hush[1] which seemed pregnant with drama. It was Eternity that was waiting, holding its breath as it were, to break once more through Time.

In my Father's house, said Jesus Christ, are many mansions; and the literal truth of this statement has never been more clearly reiterated than at the Ecumenical Council which is just ended.

It is not the purpose of this article to establish a point-to-point parallel between Basava and Christ, either as persons or as founders of a creed; but only, and that as generally as possible, to indicate similarities, where they exist, between the salient tenets of the two faiths in the spirit of ecumenism, so as to minimise what mutual

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1 Cf. Milton, Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity,
'And waving wide her myrtle wand
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land'.

repulsion there might appear to be between two ways of belief and conduct which seem to have, between them, many a point of contact.

It is a fundamental article of Christian belief that Christ was the Word made flesh, the incarnation of the Second Person of the Divine Trinity; and though the Evangelist gives us a detailed genealogy of Joseph, the carpenter, husband of Mary, mother of Christ, it is only to conclude that Jesus were not Joseph's son but the Holy Spirit's, born of a virgin. Jesus himself asserted, in no equivocal terms, that he was — and not merely figuratively — the Son of God as much as he was the Son of Man. The Old Testament had prophesied him in unmistakable terms; and John the Baptist had announced his coming, as of one greater than himself.

Christ's words and acts seemed to bear out both his claim and the prophecies. His life was entirely blameless. Though he was subjected to his parents in his childhood, his wisdom seemed to have been infused in him at birth. His life between the age of twelve and thirty is a blank; and when he reappears, it is to announce the Kingdom of Heaven. The remaining three years were whirlwind years. Though some of his acts seem appealingly human, they are such acts as one would expect from Divinity clothed in human flesh. He was not ashamed, occasionally, to give a slip to his enemies and persecutors; for he knew he had a mission to fulfil. His conduct at the Garden of Gethsemani is the very human gesture of a God: 'Father, let this cup pass from me; but not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' So is his great cry of despair on the cross: 'Father, Father, why dost Thou forsake me?' — as if to give us an example, as Chesterton suggested, of the occasional impotence of omnipotence.

Basava's lineage has been in doubt; but it has been very nearly established that he was the son of Mādarasa and Mādalāṁbike, of (or near about) the present Bāgewādi, in Bijapur district. As in the case of John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus, Basava was born of aged parents, as if by divine intervention. The Muni who blessed his Brahmin parents told them: 'Let the child be named Basava. His life is blessed. We have to fulfil a great purpose through him'; which reminds us of old Simeon: "Now dost thou dismiss Thy servant,

O Lord, according to Thy word in peace: because my eyes have seen Thy salvation." He, too, like Jesus, confounds the wise men in the temple. Unlike Jesus, who willingly accepted baptism from John,[2] Basava refuses to have his *upanayana* performed, but accepts a Guru. Unlike Jesus, he was married (perhaps twice) and had a child. And he was for many years the Minister of Bijjaḷa, the Jain king whose capital was Kalyāṇa. How he spread his doctrines there and set up an Assembly of Saints, until a literal application of his faith in human equality touched off a conflict with the king, is common knowledge. Basava, too, had his hour of Passion.

It is a Vīraśaiva belief that Basava was an incarnation of Nandi and had already passed through six lives before he was born to Mādarasa and Mādalaṁbike at (or near Bāgewāḍi):

"In my first birth, thou madest me
Gaṇēśvara, Śilāda by name,
Calling me by my name,
To keep me as thy servant-man.

In my second birth, thou madest me
Gaṇēśvara, Skanda by name,
Calling me by my name,
To harbour me in thy Grace.

In my third birth, thou madest me
Gaṇēśvara, Nīlalōhita by name,
Calling me by my name,
To be a plaything of thy mirth.

In my fourth birth, thou madest me
Gaṇēśvara, Manōhara by name,
Calling me by my name,
As prompter of the heart.

In my fifth birth, thou madest me
Gaṇēśvara, Kālalōcana by name,
Calling me by my name,
To make me ever to destory.

2 Matt., III, 13.

In my sixth birth, thou madest me
Gaṇēśvara, Vṛṣabha by name,
Calling me by my name,
As carrier for thee to ride..."[3]

But he also feels he has ever been close to God, as the Lord's carrier;[4] in another mood, he, Basava, is older than He who was before all gods.[5] However, in this life, he is no more than a man. Consistent with his belief that to be born is a punishment and a proof of imperfection, he is ever giving vent to his disgust with life. He feels the bonds of life galling him, a noose about his life; his lot is as the moon's; like a mouse in a pile of bags, he has no peace, and no hope of peace until death; his plight is a frog's in the shadow of a snake. He realises, like Hamlet, how weary, stale and unprofitable are to him the uses of this world. Like Hamlet, too, he bears the burden of the burning flesh. He experiences the distress, the despair, of a convict standing on the gallows. He is in the snare of Māyā, which is ever casting a darkness on his path when he would draw near to his Lord. No wonder his faith is, at times, far from clear. Māyā has him dancing to her ding-dong tune. His mind is like a lizard darting about a hedge. Like a chameleon changing colour, he is a prey to uncertainties, indecisions:

"My spirit leaps about —
A monkey on a bough."[6]

His mind is ever reverting to its natural bent — "like a dog riding a palanquin."[7] That is what he calls his "feverish mind."

Basava's attitude, accordingly, far from being one of superiority, is not even the attitude of one who is conscious of his saintly status: all he is conscious of is his mission, the difficult means to be employed to that end, and, above all, his own unworthiness. In this he challenges comparison, not with Christ, but with the greatest of

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3 Basava Vacana, 4
4 B. V., 3
5 B. V., 2
6 B. V., 32
7 B. V., 34

Christian saints, notably St. Paul. He felt himself to be a sinner, because he had set his standard very high. Faith must be unflinching, unwavering.

Works must match belief. Basava abhors such as would hold "a sword in their left hand, flesh in their right."[8] Naturally, hypocrisy in any form, and in the highest places, was Basava's favourite butt. Mere ritual would not do for him:

> "In vain, in vain
> The shallow, aped observances!"[9]

> "Counterfeit coin
> Will never circulate:
> They never will permit
> Counterfeit coin."[10]

Christ ever averred that he had come, not to destroy the Scriptures but to fulfil them. Yet he found himself, quite often, observing: "It has been said..... But I say.....". Basava is equally ready to go beyond the scriptures; and he does so even more aggressively:

> "I'll gird myself with arms
> To fight the Vedas;
> I'll put fetters on
> The Śāstras;
> I will raise weals on Logic's back;
> Look you, I will chop off
> The Āgamas' nose!"[11]

Basava, too, had his Scribes and Pharisees, whom Christ described, with equally righteous indignation, as a brood of vipers and whited sepulchres.

He too had his vendors in the temple, whom the prince of peace and love scourged out of the house of God. Basava knew the

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8 B. V., 719
9 B. V., 71
10 B. V., 198
11 B. V., 716

time-servers and accommodators, the chameleon 'half-believers of their casual creeds'[12]:

"If you meet Bhaktas, you
Shave off your head;
If you meet Śaraṇas, you
Strip yourself bare;
If you meet Brahmins, you
Intone their Hari's name;
Whoever you meet,
So you become:
I hate to see
Such harlot brood!"[13]

Even in himself he detects flaws, symptoms of lukewarm piety; and, in his humility, chastises himself most severely of all:

"Unless the body melt
When heart with heart doth blend;
Unless hairs stand on end
Even as a touch is felt;
Unless tears begin to flow
When eyes meet eyes;
When sobs begin to rise
With each word spoken...
But alas! not one token
Of love is seen in me
For Kūḍala Saṅgama: behold
My rank hypocrisy!"[14]

He, therefore, prayed for single-mindedness, for a steadfast faith:

"Make me, O Father, a crippled man
Who will not wander here and there;
Make me, O Father, a sightless man
Whose glances will not rove astray;
Make me, O Father, hard of ear
Lest I should hear of aught but Thee..."[15]

And when he is more sure of himself, Basava compares himself to the Cakōra bird, the lotus, the bee:

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12 Vide M. Arnold, The Scholar Gypsy
13 B. V., 103
14 B. V., 378
15 B. V., 59. Also Cf. Matt., V, 29, 30

"The Cakōra waits, intent,
The moonlight's silver dawn;
The lotus' heart is bent
Upon the splendid morn;
The bee's on the flower's scent.
Even thus, for Thee, even thus
My heart is tremulous,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!"[16]

Absolute dedication is what he seeks, a complete surrender of himself:

"Make of my body, Lord, the pole;
Make of my head, the gourd;
Make of my nerves the wires, O Lord,
And of my fingers the plectrum make;
Intone thy two-and-thirty syllables;
Thump on my heart to beat the time,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!"[17]

The spirit, as well as the imagery, are worthy of a poet-saint. As in Tagore and Mrs. Browning, the poet is but the musical instrument, passive to the breath of the Great Player: but he may also sing himself, in the full confidence of love:

"I do not know the prosody
Of beat or measure, nor the count
Of rhythm and of tone;
I do not know
This kind of feet or that!
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord,
Since Thou art past offence,
I sing as love commands the tune!"[18]

On the other hand, without perfect dedication, one is only a peacock or a parrot:

"...What if you play and sing and read?
Does not the peacock play?
Does not the string too sing?
Does not the parrot read?"[19]

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16 B. V., 364
17 B. V., 498
18 B. V., 493
19 B. V., 207

Or one is as a man strutting about on an elephant, or preening himself on a horse — flaunting in saffron and in musk, ignorant of the Truth.[20] Hence Basavaṇṇa's need for inward purity. The soul must be purified, by trial and torment if need be, to make it a fit offering of love:

"Melt my heart and purge its stains,
Test it and in fire refine!
Hammer, so the hammer pains,
To pure gold this heart of mine!
Beat from me, great Craftsman, beat
Anklets for Thy devotees' feet!"[21]

The Lord is a fastidious lover, and demands perfect cleanliness in his beloved:

"...Unless I pick the foulness in my eyes,
He will not let me see him; unless I wash
My hand, he will not touch;
Unless I wash my feet,
He will not sleep with me!"[22]

One must purge oneself of all sin, or temptation to sin, abjure all greed and lust; it is not the cleanliness of the body alone that is wanted:

"O brothers, ye who dip into a stream,
O masters, ye who dip into a stream,
Renounce, renounce, renounce
Relations with another's wife;
Renounce
The lusting for another's goods!"[23]

Christ, too, laid great stress on purity of heart no less than of the body. "Blessed are the clean of heart," he said in the Sermon on the Mount, "for they shall see God." It was the precondition, the price you had to pay, for the ultimate, the beatific vision. One must lose the world to gain it, said Christ, in the kind of paradox that was dear to his heart. Basava says:

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20 B. V., 639
21 B. V., 251
22 B. V., 911
23 B. V., 644

"The cowards of this world
Are heroes of another world."[24]

It was part of this insistence on inward and outward purity that both Christ and Basava should have deprecated possessions. The rich man who would follow Christ must first sell all he has. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven. Basava, in a brilliant yet homely image, rebukes man's pride of possession by comparing him to a washerman who fusses over the clothes of a whole city he has to wash, as if he owned them himself:

"Even as a washerman, who fusses over
The city's clothes,
What dotard have I been, to say
'Mine is the gold, the woman mine,
And mine the land'!"[25]

Christ's way was the way of perfection. Be ye perfect, he said, even as my Father in Heaven is perfect. He would have nothing but the best. Basava, too, is jealous of the least decline from the best, from the whole truth. Though naturally reverential towards 'the wearers of the garb', he would treat them with undisguised scorn if they were found unworthy of the garb:

"To those who hunger I offer food
To those who wear the garb, I bow;
But when I witness deeds
That do not fit the garb, I say
— You witness it, Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord —
'Fie! fie!' "[26]

It is, once again, Christ's rage against the Pharisees and Scribes. This discrepancy between the outer guise and the inner virtue troubled Basava a great deal:

"Unless I am pure within
How should I fare
By smearing my outside?
Unless my heart is touched,
How should I fare
By stringing beads?"[27]

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24 B. V., 901
25 B. V., 309
26 B. V., 757
27 B. V., 476

The religion founded by Jesus Christ is essentially one of love. That is what the New Testment, as Browning suggested, has added to the Power and The Wisdom of God which the Old Testament had already manifested. Love, charity, compassion, whatever one elects to name it — that is the essence of Christianity. That is also the essence of the Vīraśaiva faith as Basava conceived it:

"What sort of religion can it be
Without compassion?
Compassion needs must be
Towards all living things;
Compassion is the root
Of all religious faith".[28]

Basava's abhorrence of distinctions of caste based on birth, wealth, trade or sex finds vehement utterance in many of his vacanas. The mildest of them may serve for a sample:

"Unless the pride of caste is gone,
How can I be a śaraṇa?
Unless the bonds of fate have left,
How can I be a devotee?
Leaving all trace of I and Mine,
You have to be the lowest of the low!"[29]

Christ, one remarks, shocked even his best disciples, by mixing with Samaritans, publicans, prostitutes and other sinners, though not from any abstract love of equality, but from simple charity: "They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill"[30]

Christ gave a striking lesson in charity issuing from self-knowledge when he warned people against seeing the mote in another's eye and not the beam in their own. Basava has a droll picture of just such a man:

"A snake-charmer with his noseless wife
— A snake in his hand —
Going to find good omens for
The marriage of their son,
Meets another snake-charmer with his noseless wife
And cries, 'The omens are bad!'
Mark what a clever chap!..."[31]

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28 B. V., 247
29 B. V., 868
30 Matt., IX, 12
31 B. V., 105

Like Christ, too, Basava set great store by faith. Christ told the woman with the issue of blood, 'Go, thy faith hath made thee whole!'[32] Basava attaches an equal importance to the faith that can not only move mountains but burn up sin itself. It is like the philosopher's stone, transmuting base metal into gold at one touch:

> "...Iron is no more itself:
> Touched by Liṅga, all sinful acts
> Are no more the same..."[33]

To Basava, as to the Christian, God is the only True friend:

> "Nobody is for anybody, so!
> The fallen have no friend!
> Thou only, Lord
> Kūḍala Saṅgama,
> Art the world's kin!"[34]

Christ called himself a good shepherd. For Basava, God is the herdsman, and himself a member of his herd. When the poor beast falls into the mire and thrashes its legs in helpless plight, who else can raise it up but God?[35]

While it is easy enough to mark the close similarities, specially on the more ethical, and human, plane — certain basic differences on the theological plane must not be over-looked. To take one instance, while Basava addresses God as Śiva, Lord or Father, his ultimate aspiration is to be lost in the impersonal Reality, the Absolute, the Void. "Liṅga Himself is neither form nor formlesness".[36] To Christ, God is one and personal. Also man dies to rise again and to experience eternal bliss or eternal damnation: there is never any extinction of personality, in man or God. To the Christian, therefore, resurrection is an article of his creed, and the supreme hope. To Basava, the ultimate realisation is *not* to be born again.[37]

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32 Matt., IX, 22
33 B. V., 137
34 B. V., 25
35 B. V., 53
36 B. V., 950
37 B. V., 940

Christ left behind him many sacraments, and the greatest of them, the Eucharist. "Do this in commemoration of me," he said. The Cross on which he died has itself become a great symbol, not because he enjoined it, but because he died on it, so transforming an instrument of shameful torture into a glorious symbol of his 'religion of suffering'. Although Basava revolted against formalism, it was the soulless, loveless formalism that was repugnant to him. He knew that a religion cannot altogether do without forms, without symbols; only, these forms had to be charged with meaning, these symbols were to signify something very real beyond them.'[38] Hence his insistence on his followers wearing on their persons not only the Liṅga but the *rudrākṣi* beads. The concept of the Guru in Vīraśaivism is perhaps more fundamental than the idea of the priest, the sacrificer (*sacerdos*) in Christianity; but Christ did give these the power of opening and closing the gates of Heaven, to bless and to forgive. The necessity of Grace is fundamental to Basava. No understanding is possible unless the Guru's hand is raised to bless: it is like the auspicious time when water congeals into pearl.[39]

It is not our intention to push the parallels too far. But one is tempted to refer to a few more points of similarity. Both Basava and Christ died young; and the period of their active mission was quite short. They made conversions in their own lifetime; their disciples and followers came from all classes, most of them from the lowest vocations and walks of life. Christ built his Church upon a fisherman. Basava held wood-cutters, basket weavers and cobblers in the highest esteem, above himself. Both Christ and Basava are reported to have worked miracles, including the resurrection of the dead. Basava is said to have turned grain into pearls, and, what is more important, converted thieves, rogues and libertines into Śaraṇas. Neither of them was indifferent to the physical comforts of his followers. But while Christ fed his followers by the multi-

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38 B. V., App. 9
39 B. V., 806

plication of loaves and fishes, Basava, used his great influence to feed thousands of people daily at Kalyāṇa.

There was an institution which seems peculiar, though not exclusive, to Vīraśaivism in Basava's time: the *Kāyaka;* that everyone should earn his living by work done with the sweat of his brow, but also in spirit of dedication to God. Although Christ rebuked those who, over-solicitous for their material welfare, took too much thought of the morrow, and bade them consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, he, by his own example as a child, and by the whole spirit of his teaching, has lent dignity to labour.

No two religions repeat each other, or they would not be two religions; and it is not practical to try to reduce the different religions either to their highest common factor or their lowest common denominator; for religion is not intellectual conviction alone, but a way of life, and so related, in an intricate, often inextricable way, to the whole of one's culture. Hence Christianity is one faith, Vīraśaivism another; and no purpose will be served by an attempt to reduce their several intellectual and dogmatic assumptions. Likewise, Basava is not Christ, nor Christ Basava. Even within the same faith and the same religious culture, the very saints differ widely, even violently, in what may be called their style of sanctity. They are great, each in his own manner; and great because, even in attaining to God, they dared to be themselves.

ARMANDO MENEZES

Oh God, give heed unto my word:
From highest to the lowest caste
Equals are Śiva's votaries.
From Brahmin to the carrion-eater
The God-forsaken are alike.
I vouch, I trust, that this is so.
I feel no shadow of a doubt.
But if, — let Kūḍala Saṅga's wrath
Knock out from me my teeth and nose! ‡

‡Selected Sayings of Basava—by C. S. Bagi,
Pub. by V. C. Heddurshetti, Vachana Mantapa, Belgaum (1952)

BASAVA AND TIRUVAḶḶUVAR

On the occasion of the eighth centenary celebration of Śrī Basavēśvara, the greatest mystic-reformer-teacher of Karnāṭaka, an attempt has been made in this brief compass to see him alongside of Tiruvaḷḷuvar, the greatest mystic law-giver of Tamilakam who appeared on this planet about 2000 years ago. No author is as great as Tiruvaḷḷuvar in Tamil and his famous work *Tirukkuraḷ* can be described as the Bible of the Tamil people and it has the glory of having been translated into many languages of the world. It is unfortunate that very little is known about the life of Tiruvaḷḷuvar, different religionists claiming him as belonging to their respective faiths.[1] Though Basavēśvara belonged to a much later date (1160), he also suffers the fate of Tiruvaḷḷuvar in that, precious little is available regarding biographical details about him. Several traditional accounts one conflicting with another have sprung up around the halo of this divine personality.

Perhaps this vague and hazy biographical picture had made them dearer to us. There is no gainsaying the fact that their genuine outpourings of heart are of great universal appeal for all time. As V. V. S. Aiyar, one of the translators of *Tirukkuraḷ* puts it,

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1 Dr. G. U. Pope, one of the early translators of Tirukkuraḷ into English goes to the extent of saying that Vaḷḷuvar having lived in Mylapore could have had the opportunities of listening to the sermon on the Mount as expounded by St. Thomas and thus could have come under Christian influence.

"Everywhere Tiruvaḷḷuvar has sounded the utmost depths of human thought. The prophets of the world have not emphasised the greatness and power of the moral Law with greater insistence or force." Perhaps the self same tribute may be paid to Basavēśvara.

During the middle of the 12th century there was chaos in the social and religious order of the country. The Buddhistic and Jain religions had lost ground and the influence of the three Ācāryas of the Hindu faith had been more on the learned and the privileged few. All the scriptures and ethical tenets remained a sealed book for the ordinary man in this part of the country who knew only Kannaḍa. Society was plunged in darkness. Just at that juncture Basavēśvara appeared on the scene and shed the much needed light and radiated new energy. As in *kuraḷ* we have his great experiences enshrined in the immortal *vacanas* (pithy sayings). No doubt there is a good deal of Vīraśaiva teaching in these compositions. '*Liṅgāṅga sāmarasya*' (union of *aṅga* with *Liṅga*) is the ultimate goal of all Vīraśaiva sādhakas and towards this end *Ṣaṭsthala* process (the six steps or stages) has been prescribed and detailed.[2] But most of these *vacanas* are of universal and eternal values set in lucid, simple Kannaḍa, replete with poetical lilt. They touched the heart of common man as never before. There was a new but natural approach. People heard great things in their own language. Just as Tiruvaḷḷuvar sang his universal message of *Puruṣārtha* in crystal clear short *Kuraḷ* couplets, so did Basavēśvara sing his message of *Puruṣārtha* in crystal clear pithy *vacanas*. There is freshness in their utterances, force in their expressions, conviction in their experiences, shedding kindly light all around. Indeed they became beacon lights for the benighted souls. Their experiments on life enabled them to evolve the much needed code of conduct based on inner purity (*antaśśuddhi*). Justice tempered with mercy or human kindness is the keynote of all their teachings. They write on almost all things that concern man's life. There may be found a good many similarities or identities of thoughts

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2 Vacanas arranged in this order could be seen in "Śrī Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada vacanagaḷu" edited by S. S. Basavanal.

between the two. This is as it should be. After all great truths are perceived, experienced and expressed by all seers on identical lines. Great minds think alike.

There is a very important point of similarity in the matter of exposition between Tiruvaḷḷuvar and Basavēśvara. Not only both employ their respective mother tongues to convey their spiritual findings, but also employ simple symbols or figures of speech drawn directly from life and Nature with which the common folk are familiar. They have no use for the stale conventional patterns. The second chapter of *Tirukkuraḷ* deals with the glory of the rains. One of the great modern commentators of *Kuraḷ*, Tiru Vi Ka interprets this to mean the greatness of "God's Śakti or divine grace." Tiruvaḷḷuvar is addressing a society where agriculture is the pre-eminent occupation. Even in the *Porut pāl* (Part II of the work dealing with Politics) he refers to *uḷavu* or cultivation; but we have to understand by that *uḷavu*, human labour in general, illustrated so beautifully well by agriculture. In this sense Nature becomes the concrete basis of Dharma as contrasted with the inner divine inspiration of Dharma (*Aram*).[3] Does this not correspond with the agricultural (*āramba*, *Kāyaka*, etc.) references made by Basavēśvara in his *vacanas*? His classical utterances, such as "By thy sweet will, a stump of wood can sprout up into leaves" (*nīnolidare koraḍu konaruvudu ayyā*) is a beautiful expression of his firm faith in "divine grace" couched in agricultural language. A word about the mode of composition of these two great works:

The *Kuraḷ* is divided into three parts corresponding to the three objectives of human life (*Puruṣārtha*); (*i*) Righteousness (*Aram pāl*) consisting of 380 couplets (*ii*) Wealth (*Porut pāl*) consisting of 700 couplets and (*iii*) Love (Kāmat pāl) 250 couplets (in all 1330 couplets). The first part on Righteousness deals entirely on right conduct for man prescribing elaborately for the life of the householder and that of the ascetic. The second part on 'Wealth' deals almost

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3 Philosophy of Tiruvaḷḷuvar by Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaran (Annals of Oriental Research, Vol. XIX, Part I, p. 25).

completely with Politics and Administration with pointed reference to State craft. The third part on Love is a splendid commentary on the course of love with all its ramifications. Perhaps there is greater common ground between the first two parts of the *Kuraḷ* and the *Vacanas* of Basavēśvara.

Basavēśvara's *vacanas* are 961 according to S. S. Basavanal and have been classified into six sections corresponding to the six *sthalas* of Vīraśaiva Philosophy: (1) *Bhakta sthala* (stage of *Bhakta*) (2) *Māheśvara sthala* (stage of *Māheśvara*) (3) *Prasādi sthala* (stage of *Prasādi*) (4) *Prāṇaliṅgi sthala* (stage of Prāṇaliṅgi) (5) *Śaraṇa sthala* (stage of *Śaraṇa*) and (6) *Aikya sthala* (stage of *Aikya* — union).

As in Tiruvaḷḷuvar's *Kuraḷ* there is an underlying human current which runs through all the utterances of Basavēśvara. Freed from the purely technical details pertaining to Vīraśaiva system, his *vacanas* are the musings of a mystic poet. There is something that is of universal appeal — something that has value for all age and clime. We can discern in his compositions — touching sermons on dedication, introspection, austerity, humility, God's Mercy, faith, charity, hope, purity in thought, word and deed, duty, dignity of vocation, scathing satire on imposture, etc. — everything to be marked for sterling.

Through the following few lines let us ponder over the identity of thought and feeling of these two great savants. The study has been somewhat random and yet the results are astounding.[4]

Basavēśvara	Tiruvaḷḷuvar
In praise of the Lord	
Of what avail is all thy learning, so long as thou art ignorant of the path of the Lord (Śiva patha) 143.	Of what avail is all thy learning, if you worship not the holy feet of Him of the perfect intelligence 2.
He alone who surrendereth himself to the Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva is saved 773	They alone cross the ocean of births and deaths who take refuge in the feet of the Lord; the others traverse it not. 10

4 The English translations of the *Kuraḷ* quoted here are from that of V. V. S. Aiyar and those of Basavēśvara *vacanas* are by the present writer of this paper. Numbers given at the end of each rendering indicate the numbers of the vacanas as given in Basavanal's compilation and the numbers of the Kuraḷ as given in the English Translation of V. V. S. Aiyar.

Basavēśvara	Tiruvaḷḷuvar
Love	
The so-called devotees who are crooked inside but lovely outside — please not the Lord... 96	Of what avail is a lovely outside, if love, the soul's ornament, hath no place in the heart? 79
Kindness of speech	
Which is that righteousness (*Dharma*) devoid of mercy (*daya*)? Mercy is the origin of all righteousness. 247	The speech that is truly kind is the speech of the righteous man which is full of tenderness and free from dissimulation. 91
Speech should be like pearl garland, like gem lustre and like crystal beam ... 802	Modesty and loving speech, these alone are ornaments to a man and none other 95
Non-desiring of others' belongings	
I fear the terrible thing called another man's wife and another man's wealth. Dost thou not know the fate of Rāvaṇa? 446	Dost thou desire to know the power of the saint who hath quenched the cravings of his five senses? Look on the king of the Gods, Indra; his one example is enough. 25
Non-envying	
Why get angry with those who are angry with thee... The fire in one's house first consumeth one's house and then only the neighbour's house. 248	Envy itself is scourge enough for the envious man; for, even if his enemies spare him, his own envy will work his ruin. 165
Refrain from vain speaking	
Hark thou who with ulterior motives indulgest in vain talks. The aimless arrow striketh not its mark? 202	Speak thou only such words as are worth saying; and speak not ever words that are profitless and vain 200
Mercy	
Have Mercy on all living creatures. Mercy is the origin of all righteousness. 247 (Part of this quoted earlier)	Follow the good path and learn to be merciful; and if thou examine the teachings of other faiths also, thou wilt see that mercy is the only salvation. 241

Basavēśvara	Tiruvaḷḷuvar
Imposture	
Of what avail is worship, as long as steadfastness in mind is not there? Of what avail is the immersion of stone under water, can it become softer? 299	Many there be whose heart is impure but who bathe in holy streams and prowl about. 278
Truthfulness	
Where there is Truth there is complacence; then is there anything that cannot be achieved? 913	Many things I have seen in this world: but of all the things that I have seen, there is nothing that is higher than truth. 300
Abstain from anger, killing	
Steal not, kill not, utter not lies, get not angry, hate not others, praise not thyself, blame not thy enemies — This is purity both internal and external. 235	Whosoever thy offender be, forget thy anger; for from anger spring a multitude of ills. 303 The greatest of virtues is non-killing; killing bringeth in its train every other sin. 321
Friendship of the worthy	
The friendship of the righteous is desirable. It is harmful to befriend the wicked. Hold the one and shun the other. 134	Esteem thou the men that have grown old in righteousness and acquire their friendship. 441
Cherishing of kindness	
Doth not the crow call its kindred when it seeth a grain of food. Doth not the hen call its family when it findeth a bit of food? *Śiva Bhakta* (devotee) devoid of *Bhakti* feeling, is worse than a crow or hen. 437	The crow concealeth not its food selfishly from its fellows but shareth it lovingly with them! Prosperity will abide only with men of like nature. 527
Speech	
Merit and demerit are thy own making. Polite speech such as saying "O sire" (*ayya*) is itself "Heaven" and impudent utterance such as saying "Ye be damned" (*elavo*) is itself "Hell". 240	Prosperity and ruin are in the power of the tongue; guard thou therefore against imprudence of speech. 642

Sinner's wealth

The sinner's hoarded wealth is for *prāyaścitta* (propitiation) and not for the deserving. Dog's milk is for dog and not fit for the sacred *pañcāmṛta*. 223

Behold the man who thinketh not of righteousness and who pileth up wealth by starving himself and his heart; his wealth is hoarded only for the behoof of strangers. 1009

Greatness

It is the self same earth on which the slum habitation and the temple of the Lord stand. Those who realise self consider all birth same. 878

The manner of birth is the same for all men; but their reputation vary because they differ in the lives that they lead. 972

Even these very limited references bear ample testimony to the common greatness of the two classical works. Each is a book of life. Each utterance therein is "an Iliad in a nutshell." We find in them results of great experiments on Truth made available for the common man towards the upliftment of his soul in terms of love and compassion. The clarion call to humanity by the two master minds may be summed up in Basavēśvara's immortal lines: "*Kāyakave Kailasa*" (in your avocation lies your Heaven)

"*martya lōka embudu Kartārana kammaṭavayya*; *illi*
salluvavaru alliyū salluvarayya; *illi*
salladavaru alliyū
sallarayya Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva"

(this world is the Mint of the Lord; those that are of legal tender here will be of legal tender there — the life hereafter — ; those that are of no legal tender here, will not be of legal tender there).

"*Devanu obba nāma halavu*"

(There is only one God — but His names are many).

M. MARIAPPA BHAT

As fulgent fire concealed in water
As sweet savour suffusing the plant —
As fragrance freed from the unfolding bud —
As love's promise in the burgeoning maid —
— Thy essence
My Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama.§

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§ Thus Spake Basava — by A. Sunderaraja Theodore and Devendra Kumara Hakari, Pub. by B. D. Jatti, Basava Samiti, Bangalore (1965)

BASAVĒŚVARA AND MĀNICKĀVASAGAR

Tamil Śaivism:

"Once I thought that the body was something base and mean, but now I know that there resides in the body and only through it do I apprehend Reality".

So sang Tirumular the greatest Tamil mystic that ever lived. The eighteen Siddhas known to the Tamil country acknowledge him as their Teacher Supreme and claim that he was the founder of the esoteric School of mysticism. There are no authentic records in history about the saint. According to legends as well as from references here and there in Puranic Literature it is presumed that he lived somewhere about 6000 B.C. His 'Tirumanthiram' is acclaimed as a testament for all time of spiritual experience. It is said that he is perhaps the only Indian mystic who has left behind a record of his experiences as well as a system for appropriating grace of God through spiritual exercises by following which other aspirants may likewise ascend this ladder to the "vision glorious."

Albert Schweitzer writing on saint Tiruvaḷḷuvar complains that with the one exception of the author of the famous *Kuraḷ* all other oriental philosophers and mystics deny the reality of life and the world. Life-negation is the accepted dictum and the body therefore in its secular toils is more an encumbrance and an impediment than a help to project the soul on its celestial journey. This Western sage and savant, it is contended, might not have made this statement had he been acquainted with Tirumular's teachings. In fact he

might surely have acclaimed him as the saint after his own heart. It is in Tirumular that we find the doctrine of Life-affirmation. To him the body is a gift from God to be cherished as a precious treasure as it is the agent and instrument whereby Grace is appropriated. It therefore is not to be considered as an execrable delusion and therefore to be despised. He calls every mortal

"A walking temple of God"

and adds that any offering made to this temple is more readily acceptable to God than the offerings made to the images made in stone in temples made in stone. The dignity of the body in Tirumular's view is as edifying as that of the soul or the spirit. It is from such a view stems the idea of the consecration of the body (sacrament) and all that is done through the instrumentality of the body. The Manichaean view that the body is evil and therefore to be denegrated (some saints have called it an ass) does not find a place here. In principle the material world is transmuted from a vale of misery and woe into a rewarding context for man to work out his salvation. Instead of mere passivity before the trials and tribulations which frustrate his life on earth it makes man lift his sights and activises him to take up the challenge for making the world a better place to live in. It seems to provide a new vision and purpose for all his endeavour and enterprise in the world which constitutes the base wherefrom he has to build the spiritual superstructure. The world and the life of man therein assume a cardinal rôle.

It is not unnatural therefore that from such a view of life the mystic sees value in all creatures and above all in fellowman whom, he now views, as a co-partaker in the common destiny in God. The inestimable value of human personality undergirds this philosophy for herein is a view of man with an integrated personality. Every man is a part of the entire humanity and all share alike the common longing for salvation and eternal felicity.

"No man is an iland intire of itselfe
Every man is a piece of the continent,
a part of the maine" (J. Donne)

It is from such a view that man's vocation and earthly pursuits

achieve a new spiritual basis instead of being confined to a secular purview. It affirms positively the fact that man expresses his personality through his occupation, whatever its nature. Whatever excellence he exhibits in his work as — artisan, metal smith, mason, craftsman or administrator etc., — it not only redounds to the exaltation of his personality but because of it, he pays homage to the glory of God, his Creator. Work becomes then an offering that man makes to God in praise for the faculties He has endowed him with. Such is the significance for integrating work with worship. This is the view of man which supplied the rational basis for all social reform and social justice. Work in a real sense then becomes 'vocation'. Work being the condition of life it becomes the basic principle for seeing all mankind as one humanity travelling together towards that one divine far off event, the seers and sages spoke of. The Śaivite saints of the Tamil country left no systematic theology but their hymns in Devaram witness to their belief in the love of God as the motive for their love of man.

"They have no love for God
Who have no love for all mankind" (Tirumular)

The Siddhānta Tradition and Mānickāvasagar:

Of the twelve canonical works called Tirumurai, the eighth called Tiruvachagam by Mānickāvasagar is incomparable both for its poetic utterance as well as for its spiritual message. In fact the outstanding opus of Śaivism is nothing but an anthology of the devotional hymns of the sixtythree Nayanars from the 7th century onwards. It is in the tradition of Tirumular that Mānickāvasagar appeared as some believe in the 9th century. His Tiruvasagam comprises deeply religious hymns which speak of the progress of the soul from the trammels and toils of earthly passions and ignorance into the realm of eternal bliss, of liberty and enlightenment. The leit motif which runs through all his works is the stupendous wonder of Divine Grace which he had himself experienced through the loving mercy of God. He is never tired of singing about this bestowal, his joys and exaltation, and how he had sometimes strayed, his failings and shortcomings and how because of God's Grace, he

triumphs in the end. In his ecstasy of bhakti he experiences intimacy with God whom he addresses with tender feelings:

> "There was in Thee desire for me,
> In me, desire for Thee."

"Few works in India's religious literature excel Tiruvasakam in wisdom and grace, lofty feeling, fervid piety, passionate longing for spiritual realization and faith in divine Grace," says a Jesuit scholar (Religious Hinduism, Catholic Press). Tiruvasakam from cover to cover breathes joy and rapture of the life lived in mystic union with God. His profound belief in God and in His redeeming love and mercy is stated in such utter simplicity as only one who has tasted it and drunk a deep draught of it can.

It is claimed, thanks to this work, that Śaivism was able to withstand the challenge of Buddhism in the Tamil country. This is an imperishable work and, like all classics, is beyond the cloying hand of time. Devotees in Tamil country have sung and wept over Māṇickāvasagar's hymns through the centuries. It is a proverbial saying in Tamil:

> Those who are not moved by Tiruvacakam
> Will never be moved by any other vacakam
>
> (Tiru-Divine; vasakam—words)

Śaivite hymns are classified into twelve anthologies (Tirumurai) and of these Tiruvacakam is accorded the eighth place. Shri Ramalingaswamigal on reading this work said:

> "O, divine Manickavasaka!
> When my spirit fuses with your utterance
> It's like mixing sugar and cane juice
> With mead and milk; and milk and sweet fruit.
> Though in deep draughts I drink
> I return again unsatiated
> For they have become life of my life."

The Testament of Māṇickāvasagar:

What do we see in Tiruvasakam which has earned for it rightly an exalted place is dediction to Love, Mercy (Compassion) and Gnāna. Caste, birth and wealth were of no account to him. He

said that if pride of birth goes, all other evils entangled with it would wither away. He believed that unremitting surrender of one's body and its faculties as well as of all that one possesses as worldly goods, in the service of Lord Śiva, was the only way for salvation. To him *love* was all in all. He repeatedly pleads:

> "While there is life
> Let us love one another."

God's grace is freely available to all who call upon Him in this transcient life for 'For Love is Śiva!' Love God and thy neighbour which was to be proclaimed as a doctrine by Śrī Basavēśvara in the twelfth century was announced thus much earlier in the Tamil country. In Tirukkovayar (somewhat like the Song of Solomon) the poet personifies the soul as a woman and God Śiva as the Lover.

Mānickāvasagar's teaching could be called Bhakti cult in which Divine Grace is all. As in all Bhakti works the gratest stress is laid on the cardinal principle of God's Grace. This Divine Grace (anugraha, kṛpā) is the sole means which activates the bhakta in his devotions, purifies his mind and sets him free from the enslavement of sin and evil. This done, the Lord Himself comes to make abode in the devotee's soul and leads him onward to his final beatitude, that is, communion with the Lord Himself.

Thus Tiruvasakam is the saga of the exaltation of God's Grace and its transforming power of the bhakta. Bhakti itself is a gift (Grace) from God to His chosen ones but they have to respond to the advances of His love. The work of Grace is given pre-eminence in this theology of bhakti so much so there has been some controversy over the question of mutuality of relation between God's grace and human free-will. Self-effacement and utter humility required of the devotee before the all gracious Lord cannot by its very nature of the situation, it was argued, lay any claim to Grace unless there was merit and righteous deed to support it. This no doubt may appear to border on quietism and surrender to passivity because of the extreme conception of the Eternal Beatitude of the Bhakta which makes it difficult to understand clearly the utter gratuitous nature of God's Grace and of the infinite greatness of its

elevating power. We may find here a close analogy to Martin Luther's doctrine of Sola gratia (by grace alone) which also started a similar controversy in the 16th century Europe.

Grace of God meeting man:

Grace can be explained as the help or strength given to mortal man to enable him to realise the divine felicity which thus unaided he may not attain. This is in the true tradition of Śaiva Siddhanta where a distinction between the jīvātma (individual soul) and the Paramātman (supreme being) is safeguarded. The reason is, the creature in its very nature cannot enter into union with God although the soul has the divine spark. Bhakti theologians adhere invariably to some form of advaita, not the pure Advaita of Śaṅkara. As the eye cannot see except for the light of the soul, so the soul cannot know except for the light of God. God and the soul are one only in the sense that they exist and function together. Their unity however is not such as to deny their distinct existence. Advaita does not mean Oneness but inseparability. The soul freed from the threefold bond of Āṇava, Karma and Māya by the anugraha of Śiva alone, can rise to its union with its Lord and thus attain its true end. This is the Śaivism of the Āgamas, says Yogi Śuddhānada Bhārati.

The saint of grace:

The prominence given to the operation of Divine Grace in Mānickāvacagar's hymns speak of Arul (Grace) as the only remedy for Irul (darkness of Anava *i.e.*, ignorance). Divine and mystical knowledge is imparted to the soul in the shape of Grace which dispels ignorance and lights the path to deliverance. One can realise how the precondition of abject surrender to the Lord's love and mercy makes the gratuity of the divine grace seem all the more wonderful! That the omnipotent God could deign to give His grace gratuitously to a sinner, expecting nothing in return is an overwhelming thought to the devotee which makes him break out into ecstatic praise—

> "Bliss found I in infinity;
> But what didst Thou from me derive?"

Thus the soul liberated from the shakless of earthly existence rises to live in heaven's felicity that is, in the eternal consciousness and full enjoyment of Śiva's presence. The emancipated soul does not in becoming 'Swamaya' become Śiva himself. For Śiva is bliss itself whereas the soul can but enjoy that bliss. It is unlike the Vedanta which is Advaita , which considers God and soul as one.

Siddhānta differs widely from this concept of God and soul. "Siddhānta" says Śuddhānanda Bhārati "holds that the three entities Paśu, Pāśam and Pati — soul, the world and God — are real and eternal. It does not allow ascetic refusal nor pragmatic denial... It utilises nature and actual life in the world as steps to self purification... In Siddhānta, God is All in All. None can equal Him nor supersede His omnipotence. He is one with souls. Both Vedanta and Śaiva Siddhānta maintain this oneness of the soul with the Divine. Both accept the dictum Tat Twam Asi *Thou Art That.* Vedanta turns to the soul and says "*Thou* art *That*"; Siddhānta turns to God, the Soul of souls and Life of life, and says "*Thou* art that unique Reality." Siddhānta holds that the soul is not God, and can never be equal to God. The Siddhāntin might well ask "If man, the limited creature is Brahman where is the need for a Creator? Man, create the worlds!"

Siddhānta:

Siddhānta is otherwise known as Śuddha Advaita (pure advaita) that is, Śiva and Jīva are not separate, they are inseparably united even as salt and sea water, like the juice and the fruit etc. They have their own individualities. The purified soul is embraced, says Bhārathiar, by the Divine Beloved. They become *one* by the embrace. Union with the Lord and Not equal Lordship is the core of Advaita. Only the *Lotus Feet* is all that the soul craves for.

Siddhānta adores God as the pure impersonal Ākāśa. "Ākāśa is the sound principle and *Aum* (*Oṁ*) is the original sound, the mantra of the Real." Śrī Bhārati analyses *Aum* as — A, Almighty *Sat* the True Existence, through *U* the Universal Force. Cit Śakti manifests itself as *M*, the multiplicity of individual forms. He who pervades matter, the Vital and the mental, manifests Himself through His

Grace in the Universe of souls and transforms them through the evolutes of His Māyāśakti. That is the full meaning of *Aum*. This *Aum* which is the principle of Ākāśa is symbolised in the *Liṅga*.

Liṅga is said to be the most ancient form of God representation. This form is found even in the Mohenjadaro excavations. If Śaivities worship the Liṅga form, then, what can be its significance? The initiates worship it in order to purify self. The Liṅga is the symbol of the Divine in the soul

"My body is the temple,
My soul is the sanctum, and
The Divine in the core of my heart's cave
is Liṅgam." (*Appar*)

"The rich raise temples
but poor as I am
this I shall do
my legs for pillars,
my body for sanctum
my head, the golden Kaḷasa complete.

O hearken! Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama
matter passes,
but spirit abides."[1]

The Significance of Liṅga:

"Liṅgam is the indwelling soul — the form of beings" says a śiva bhakta. The Cit śakti or the Divine Grace is the support of the Liṅgam. Śakti and Śiva project themselves as Creation. The Ānanda of Śakti is the extended portion of the Liṅgam. All the tattvas or evolutes of Māyāśakti are arranged as Pīṭam. The upper portion of the Liṅgam is Śiva Tattvam and the lower Ātma tattvam; the lower tattvas go on thinning as the devotion of the devotee intensifies. As the Āṇavam (Egoism), Māya and Karma decrease, the soul becomes subtle and unites with the divine Grace and expands towards Godhead. The same Liṅgam, the Ākāśa form of Brahman is personified as the Cosmic dance of Lord Naṭarāja.

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1 Thus spake Basava, v. 34.

In the foregoing short survey of the Tamil mystics and what they believed in, from Tirumular and Śrī Mānickāvasagar in the Śaiva siddhānta tradition we are able to notice how Vīraśaiva teachings enshrined in the doctrines of Basava also stem from the same tree but as a distinct offshoot. There is unity apparently in all essentials but in the nature of the worship of Liṅga in which all spiritual discipline is made to inhere. This is both a unique mark and symbol of zealous devotion to Lord Śiva both in His power and grace.

It is worth mentioning here that despite the appeal of saints such as Tirumular and later on by Mānickāvasagar against the practice of caste and other Brahminical formularies, there did not result any stir for a reform movement. This is explained by the fact that although these saints preached these new ideas they were perhaps received at best as ideas of innovators or even heretics. Hence there was perhaps no occasion for serious notice. Also when these critics managed to get a following they usually retired into a forest and practised asceticism which naturally blunted the edge of protest. The activising of protest which is the basis for reform movement to arise is not here present. Such teaching though appealing to sentiment and intellect seem to remain inert for practical action; this is the case with most esoteric groups which grew in time into new religious sects outside the Hindu fold. But these did not make any serious impact on society as a whole since those who remained outside the inner circle continued in the old traditional ways. This is the background of Jainism and Buddhism which were distinct reform movements within the original Hindu society.

More pronounced social changes occurred when a religious leader inspired by revelation formed a new sect proposing some startling and radical changes which would mark this community off from the original society. In this new society as it were, all converts were treated as equals in the sight of God. No matter what their previous caste had been, they were free to eat, visit and intermarry with the other members of the sect.

Work is Worship:

Since the type of work that a man pursued determined his caste

which was supposed to be sanctified by karma, Basava naturally felt that such a doctrine could not be reconciled with the idea of human dignity implicit in Śaiva Siddhānta. Realising also that since Work is the inexorable condition of life and it is through work or occupation that man expresses his personality when it is performed with dedication and worshipful reverence to God, Basava was inclined to exalt the idea of work to the level of Sacrament, usually defined as a material means with inner Grace. Work then took on the connotation of worship however mean and lowly it might be. And thus when all work is integrated in this manner, it no longer is a divisive principle as was caste originally. Work became 'Kāyaka', capable of uniting all under God, for all stand as equals before the Liṅga. Reverence to the Guru (Jaṅgama) is important as he is said to image the archetypal guru in Lord Śiva. Vīraśaivism can be considered truly as a fervent bhakti marga of śaivism. However it should be borne in mind that this sect, as it came out of the traditional Hindu society, has tenets which are distinctive and also clearly demonstrate the principle of protest against the old ideas it has left behind. Dignity of work and labour truly achieve the meaning of 'Vocation' in every sense. The principle of Life-affirmation inherent here is a positive contribution to the śaivite Bhakti doctrine where work as well as the world are not to be disdained as evil in themselves but to be treated properly as sacrements, *i.e.*, material or earthly means to attain God's Grace, for the ascent of the soul.

They toil in vain
 who toil not with aim,
for the end rewardeth nought.

Tho' they give away
 their substance in alms,
 the end availeth nought.

Vain is your labour
and your giving gainless
without the indwelling
of my Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.[2]

2 Ibid. v. 44

The background story of both Mānickāvasagar and Basavēśvara show striking similarities. Both were born to Brahmin parents and were endowed with extraordinary intellectual acumen. Mānickāvasagar was prime minister to the Pāṇḍya King at Madurai and Basava held a similar post under Bijjaḷa, in 1156 A.D. Both being essentially bhaktas, they ascribe pre-eminence to Grace in the salvation of the soul although it is clear that Basava's approach was more pragmatic and world-affiming.

"Masters and sevants! all
who the Liṅga worship and adore;
and invoke for worldly goods and store —

Masters and servants! all
who the Liṅga's powers avow
imploring His favours to bestow.

Fear not!

For the earth is His
Hence 'tis yours to share
all that therein is.

And this I vouch
with all the Saints —
of Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.[3]

Vīraśaivism's mainstay is its social doctrine and its theology is qualified-monism, unlike Śaṅkara's Kevalādvaita (strict monism). The striking feature of this movement was its opposition to image worship. Basava did not accord a promiment place to the Vedas and the authority of the Brahmin class; and ordained a new priesthood, the Jaṅgamas. He decried pilgrimages and sacrificial offerings. His reforms included complete equality, casteless and classless, among his followers, which included equality of women also. Thus in not a few striking features, Vīraśaivism in its individuality went further than Tamiḷ Śavism. Vīraśaivism, as can be seen was radically nonconformist as it was not inclined to accept the claims of tradition, custom

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3 Ibid. v. 30

and convention, unexamined by reason. "Let us reason together" seems to be the note commonly underlying all the Vacanas. He appeals to reason exposing the incongruity implied in the ancient shastraic teaching and the Vedas. Thus having disposed of what was repugnant to reason he supplanted it with his own new teaching which was in accordance with reason and at the same time, had a spiritual appeal becoming man's human dignity. The Messianism implicit in this revival movement, combined with the charisma of its leader is bound to make its unfailing impact, especially on those for whom religion had become burdensome, being ritual-loaded, and salvation a dreary affair. This Messianism as a spiritual regeneration, levering off telling social changes through the common people, so to say, had seemingly anticipated social changes through economic manipulation by the proletariate which was to happen many centuries later, in another part of the world.

Inward Goodness not Ritual:

With singular emphasis Basava's teachings which span a gamut of virtues such as hospitality, charity, honesty, piety, worship etc., manifest one striking note, namely, that mere outward observance was not meritorious as inward goodness. This truly was a new insight atleast in the new emphasis with which it was proclaimed, and at that age and time.

The Liṅga discipline and worship enjoined on the devotee implies an unswerving devotion to the Supreme Transcendent Reality *i.e.*, Pure Saccidānanda. If Āgama is a divine approach to this transcendental Reality it is in essence a process in which the devotee is to be integrated utterly so that his soul or atman may attain its peace. Liṅga worship is one of the principal tenets of Vīraśaivism with its tremendous symbolism of 'Śiva Śakti'. The duality of Śiva-śakti according to Yogi Śuddhānanda Bhārati "is a polarity. It holds in tension the Creative, Transformative as well as the Destructive Force of Divine Grace." There is no existence for Śakti without Śiva and there is no manifestation of Śiva without Śakti; they are like the sun and its beams. It is this Śiva-śakti Reality that the Liṅga stands for and enables the true devotee to

attain communion with the Lord. This was a new emphasis on an old āgamic understanding for salvation.

Taken by and large, a student of religion cannot but be impressed by the fervid nostalgia very much apparent in Vīraśaivism to trace back to the pristine Dravidianism of ancient days, divesting itself of all the exotic accretions and interpolations which tended to obscure the essential things of the spirit with an over lay of ritual and formalism. There was an unreal quality about religion which Basava perceived and diagnosed as the cause for all social ills that fouled the entire social milieu. The remedy was to make religion which had become something of an unrelated and isolated interest to life; integrated as a vital principle in both individual and social life. His aim in fact was to create a New Society in which both the religious and secular concerns would be reconciled and integrated, in and through which all men, irrespective of caste and class, will "work out" their common salvation. His was a new Dharma which dulled the edge of the theory of karma and made religion meaningful for all in the work-a-day life. It supplied a spur to a substantial spirituality in society.

Social Regeneration:

Basava, therefore, though a bhakta with mystic insights, diligently sought to make them serve the regeneration of society. It was not the case with the Tamil Śaivite bhaktas. Their spiritual exercises were concentrated on self-purification with Śamādhi as the crowning experience at the end. Their soulful hymns could of course inspire the individual aspirant for the mystic way but no didactic note was ever addressed to the whole society. It would of course be pointless to deduce any inference from this comparison, as obviously the Mystic has primarily to be faithful to his own vision which is its own justification.

It is possible to concede that with Basava personal content of mystic experience had no meaning unless it can be transmuted to society, and to that extent thereupon, it was also 'social'. At any rate there cannot be the 'social' without the 'personal' and vice

versa and this mutuality is inexorable. Man-in-society was apparently the prime factor with Basava and he designed to make each meaningful to the other both for this life and the hereafter.

As issuing from the foregoing one is able to deduce an important corollary — that is, religion should have something to say to the time and age or else it ceases to be relevant and becomes merely peripheral in the concerns of man. In fact religion should never cease to be contemporary with any age. This is indeed a crucial question which every thinking person may well ask of his own faith as we witness an upsurge of secularism everywhere and traditional values in a fast retreat today. Our unwisdom may perhaps make us complacently hope that our Old Bottles are still good enough to hold the new wine unmindful of the dire consequences inherent in such a process. We cannot be too grateful to Basava for this insight which we may do well to keep it ever burnished before our vision.

It may not be out of place here to mention a few interesting details about Mānickāvasagar's life. He was born at Thiruvathavoor in the ancient Pāṇḍya Kingdom. His real name is not known. He was, we are told, known as Thiruvadūr after the place he was born in. 'Mānickāvasagar' seems to have been the name which is believed to have been conferred on him posthumously because of the quality of his songs and hymns which are like 'mānickam' or gems. The Pāṇḍya ruler of Madurai finding him to be extraordinarily intelligent and brilliant, bestowed on him the title 'Thennavan Brahmaroyan' and made him his Prime Minister. It is not clear from records and references whether the ruling Pāṇḍya at that time was Arimarthana Pāṇḍya or any other. It is a matter of controversy among scholars also as to whether the saint lived in the 3rd or 5th or 8th or even 10th century.

It is however known that the Pāṇḍya kings were Jainas and hence there was a Jaina temple in the heart of Madurai. Mānickāvasagar is also supposed to have been a Jaina and the core of his beliefs therefore does not show any serious deviation from the essential Hinduism. The saint of Vīraśaivism on the other hand spearheaded

a reformist movement which not only questioned the main tenets of Hinduism but affected them significantly.

Mānickāvasagar's famous Tiruvasakam consists of 51 cantos and some of these are composed like folk songs which are traditionally sung by youthful maidens while doing their chores and daily duties. Basava's vacanas are also folksy in character except for the fact that the verses of the Tamiḷ saints contain invariably an inner meaning as well which is always in praise of Lord Śiva. Incidentally the idiom of the 'folk' is not chosen here without significance. It implies an 'illumination' such as seeing poetry in the common place and to experience rapture in the ordinary. Tiruvempavai from Tiruvasakam is always sung throughout the Tamiḷ country even to this day at dawn during the month of Margazhi (December) especially in all Śaivite temples in the South.

The Mystic Way:

As some one had said, mystical experience is clarity in the highest degree. Perhaps a better way of stating it would be to term it 'enlightenment.' It is like opening another way or vista of consciousness which brings in a startling view of Reality. According to Wm. James (Varieties of Religious Experience) 'Mysticism concedes a new order of consciousness.' It is naturally outside the pale of Descartes' Cogito ergo sum. I think therefore I am. The strong assertion of the Ego is signally absent in the bhakti way, for mystical experience does not come merely by thinking whatever may be the degree of cerebration. It is always a sudden illumination in which the percipient realizes with a certainty that he has been vouchsafed a realisation of the Ultimate. He has had a vision and a revelation. Wm. James says "This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement."

In mystical insight we learn of the universe as experienced at a deeper level. It would be as if we were suddenly taken out of a room of distorting mirrors reflecting the world and life in complicating and confusing shadows and then brought suddenly face to face with Reality. All our accepted assumptions undergo a sea change in this process. Such an experience can be likened to that

of Plato's prisoners confined in an underground chamber, chained in such a manner that they could only see shadows of real objects, suddenly confronting reality, set free from darkness. Hence the Upaniṣadic prayer:

> "From the unreal lead me to the real
> To vidya from avidya."

To describe the world as unreal may be perplexing because it appears to invalidate our intellectual experience of light, colour, sound and of living persons we jostle with in life. Mystic experience does not of course repudiate our intellectual life. When our minds are enlightened we may be able to live with equanimity when confronted by situations which may otherwise overwhelm us. For in the revelation of the Supreme Real, all relative reality is included. In other words, the mystic views the temporal in the light of the Eternal. Hence the mystic seems to say to common mortals: "Do not be conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds by the Supernal Reality." This is indeed a high calling.

The message of mysticism:

One may well ask pertinently what image of God does man have today, in an age of science and secularization? Does quasar say anything on the subject? The ever increasing knowledge built up by observation and experiment swells up the prestige of science and the empirical outlook. In fact they threaten to immunize man against mystery and wonderment and thereby pose a challenge to faith. Scientific truths as we know at best are always tentative for they can be superseded by later discoveries. However, many today have begun to speak of the eclipse of God and of 'the anonymous Presence' for the concept of God does not appear to lend itself to verifiable experience. "Faith in God" said a theologian "is more than an intellectual belief." Nevertheless the quest for God goes on, and persists eternally in the heart of man; and the primary question now is not what God is but how men are justified in believing in Him. Perhaps we may also rightly wonder whether we are not indulging in a vain exercise of trying to define the indefinable?

Although there is apparently a rejecting of God in modern times in some quarters, it nevertheless seems to imply an oblique questioning anxiety about the meaning of God. Negation always implies an affirmation. Hence one does not reject a thing unless one knows what one is rejecting! Perhaps the meaning that man gropes for may still be mediated by mystery when he regains his sense of wonderment — the path that leads to God, the ground of our being. Do we not notice this clue in both Mānickāvasagar and Basava?

A. SUNDERARAJ THEODORE

Those who have money build
Temples to Śiva: what can I build?
A poor man, Lord, am I!
My body is the shrine,
Its pillars are my legs,
The golden pinnacle, my head.
Hear me, Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord,
There is destruction for what stands,
*But not for that which moves!**

BASAVĒŚVARA AND TUKĀRĀM

Introduction

I am aware of the fact that comparing two great men is not an easy job. Such a comparison has many limitations. Basavēśvara and Tukārām were two great minds belonging to different places and times; but still they had something in common. Here, I am attempting at pointing out how they lived, thought and spoke alike. I am not attempting at a comparative study because I am aware of my own limitations. But nevertheless I think we can view their lives and utterances alongside each other which will help us to understand them better.

Both of them are so dear and near to us that we feel they are still living amidst us. A common man refers to Basavēśvara as 'Basavaṇṇa' and calls Tukārām 'Tukōbā'. This really indicates their living influence on our minds and our deep and abiding affection for them. They command our respect as well as love.

We may not be conscious of the fact that they have inspired our lives by their everlasting teachings; the blood that courses through our veins is their blood; the air that we breathe is purified by their power and the idiom we use is their expression; wherever we go they are with us: in joy as well as in distress.

The background

What is it that is common to both? Basavēśvara and Tukārām were born in different castes and their deities were also different: Śiva and Viṭhala; Hara and Hari respectively. One revived the

Vīraśaiva faith and the other was described as the pinnacle of the temple of Bhāgawata Dharma[1] whose foundation was laid by Dñyānceśvara. One was a Vīraśaiva and the other a '*Vārkari*'. One wrote Vacanas in Kannaḍa and the other Abhaṅgas in Marāthi.

These differences are real and at the same time somewhat superficial. The common link between them is Bhakti. They were two great advocates of Bhakti. That is why they are called 'Bhakti Bhaṇḍāri' and 'Bhakta Śiromaṇi' respectively.

The Vīraśaivas and the Varkaris, I am tempted tc guess, seem to have one more common link — that is the *Nātha-Sampradāya*. I have occasionally felt that there is a great need for investigating the interconnections of the Nāthas with the Vīraśaivas and the Vārkaris.

Animiṣa, the Guru of Prabhudēva, reminds me of Matsyendranātha. The names are similar. No hasty conclusion should, however, be drawn from this. Again, the story of Allamaprabhu and Māyādevi in 'Prabhuliṅga Līle' resembles that of Matsyendranātha and Pramila, the queen of Sinhaḷa. There is that famous dialogue between Prabhudeva and Gorakṣa in 'Prabhuliṅga Līle'. The places like Śrī Śaila and Kadaḷibana have some associations with the Nāthas and others. (Here, it should be recalled that Śrī Narasimha Saraswati went to Śrī Śaila and disappeared in Kadaḷibana).

The *Nātha Sampradāya* revolted against the rigid religious order then existing. They wanted that the doors of Kaivalya should be open to one and all irrespective of their sex or caste. Women also occupied an important place among Nāthas. They preached their philosophy through the speech of the common man, *viz.*, Bengāli, Hindi, Marāthi. Bhakti can be seen in its subtle form in their

1 *Bahiṇābai:*

Santakṛpā jhālī
imārata phaḷā ālī
jñānadeve racilā pāyā
bāndhiyele devālayā
nāmā tayācā kiṅkara
teṇe kelā hā vistāra

janārdani ekanātha
staṁbha dilā bhāgavata
bhajana karā sāvakāśa
tukā jhālāse kaḷasa

teachings. I, therefore, feel that the Nātha Sampradāya might have possibly influenced the Śaraṇas and the Vārkaris in the beginning. When the Vīraśaivas and the Vārkaris becāme more influential, the Nāthas had to merge with them in Karnāṭak and Mahārāshtra.

It may be noted here, that Dñyāneśvar belonged to the *Nātha Parampara* as follows: Ādinātha — Matsyendranātha — Gorakṣa nātha — Gahininātha — Nivṛttinātha — Dñyānanātha or Dñyāneśvara. Tukārām is supposed to be the incarnation of Nāmdeva who was a disciple of Visobā Khechara. Dñynāeśvara was the Guru of Visobā Khechara. The very name 'Khechar' indicates his relationship with the Nātha Sampradāya.

The Nāthas were Śaivites and their influence is seen in the concept of Hari-Haraikya. Viṭhala is described as having a Śivaliṅga on his head. The Vārkaris believed in:

'Śivasya hṛdaye Viṣṇuḥ, Viṣṇośca hṛdaye Śivaḥ'

Tukārām does not make any distinction between Hari and Hara. They are unquestionably one, he contends, and hence says that there need be no controversy over that.[2] He has condemned those who worship deities other than Hari-Hara.[3]

Life of Tukārām

The exact year of Tukārām's birth is a matter of controversy. P.M. Lāḍ has discussed the problem fully. I agree with his opinion that Tukārām was born in Śaka 1530. Like Basavēśvara, he was born

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2 hariharā bheda
nāhi karū naye vāda...1
eka ekāce hṛdayī
gōḍī sākharecyā ṭhāyi
bhedakāsī nāḍa
eka velāṭica āḍa...2
ujave vāmāṅga
tukā mhaṇe ekaciaṅga...3

3 harihara sāṇḍuni deva
dharitī bhāva kṣullakī 1
ekā tyācī viṭaṁbaṇā
devapaṇā bhaktācī
aṅgī kavaḍe ghālīgaḷā
paraḍi kaḷāhīna hātī 2
gaḷā gāṭhā hiḍe dārī
manuṣya parī kutarī tīñ 3
māthā sendur dāñta khātī
jeṅgaṭa hātī saṭavīce 4
pūjitī vikaṭa donda
paśu soṇḍa gajācī 5
aiśā dhande cukalī vāṭā
bhāva khoṭā bhajana 6
tuka mhaṇe viṣṇu śivā
vāñcuni devā bhajatīte 7

in a pious and well-to-do family.[4] But he was not born a Brahmin. Tukārām himself has said that he was a Śūdra by Varṇa, Kuṇbi by caste and Vāṇi by profession. He was very happy in being born in that caste; because he could be free from hypocrisy![5].

Tukārām's Abhaṅgas are autobiographical in the true sense of the word. They depict the inner life as well as the outer life of Tukārām. This can also be said about the vacanas of Basavēśvara.

Tukārām's parents Bolhobā and Kanakāi spent a happy married life for a long time at Dehu. Upto the age of thirteen, Tukārām enjoyed the pleasures of childhood and the affection of his parents. This period of happy days is reflected in his Abhaṅgas which refer to various sports and games.[6]

Tukārām had to shoulder the responsibility of his family when he was thirteen, as his father was nearing sixty and his elder brother refused to take over the burden. The profession of his family was money-lending and shop-keeping. Tukārām became an expert in the profession under the guidance of his father. Later he became vexed with the dishonesty around him. Truth has a great value for him, even in his profession. In many of his Abhaṅgas, he uses images of capital, debt, interest, weights and emphasizes the virtues of uprightness and honesty.

According to the customs of his days, he was married before he entered his profession. His wife was asthmatic and he had to marry again. He must have led a happy married life for three or four years. His father died when he was seventeen. That was a severe blow of fate and that was followed also by the deaths of his mother and his brother's wife. There was an economic depression in addition

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4 Śuci Śrīmanta gharāñta
yogabhraṣṭa tūkā mukta

5 (i) Śūdravaṁśī janmalo
mhaṇōni dabhe mokalilo
(ii) barā kuṇabi kelo
nāhī tari daṁbheciasato melo

6 bāḷapaṇe aisī varuṣe gelī bārā
kheḷatā yā porā nānāmate 1
viṭūdāṇḍū caḍū lagorya vāghoḍī
caṁpe peṇḍakhaḍī ekībekī
hamāmā duṁbarī pakavyācyā bāre
kheḷe jaṅgī bhovare cuṁbācuṁbī 2
Selaḍerā āṇi nisarabhovaḍī
ucalī bāle dhōṇḍī aṅgabaḷe 3
tukā mhaṇe aise bāḷapaṇa gele
maga tāruṇya āle garvamūḷa 4

to the mental one. The result was pecuniary difficulties. Again, there was a severe famine during the years 1629—31 A.D. He had neither food nor money. His first wife died of starvation and he lost his eldest son for whom he had a great attachment.

This was the turning point in his life. He was sorely grief-stricken by these sad incidents and almost lost interest in worldly affairs. But what had happened proved to be a blessing in disguise. The obstacle between him and Viṭhala was removed, he felt.[7] He became an introvert. He experienced the meaning of

arthamanarthaṁ bhāvaya nityaṁ.

When his wife died of starvation, he realised that gold could not be a substitute for food. He must have fully understood that life is queer and that relatives are but strangers.[8]

His mind turned towards God. He repaired the Viṭhala temple built by his father, started praying (kīrtana) and fasting (ekādaśi). He learnt by heart the works of saints like Dñyāneśvara and Nāmdeva. To overcome the ego, he accepted the Tīrtha of the feet of saints. This led to the Anugraha of Nāmdeva and God Pāṇḍuraṅga who appeared to him in a dream and asked him to write the Abhaṅgas.[9] His Guru, Bābaji Caitanya, appeared to him in a dream on 23rd January 1640 and gave him the Mantra—'Rāmakṛṣṇa Hari.'[10]

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7 bāila melī muktajālī
deve māyā soḍavilī 1
viṭho tujhe mājhe rājya
nāhi dusaryāce kāja
pora mele bare jāle
deve māyā virahita kele 2

8 Kā te kāntā kaste putraḥ
Saṁsāro' yamatīva vicitraḥ

9 nāmadeve kele svapnāmājī jāge
save paṇḍuraṅge yevonīyā 1
sāṅgitale kāma karāve kavitva
vāuge nimitya bolonaye 2
māpa ṭākī saḷe dharilī viṭhale
thāpaṭoni kele sāvadhāna 3
pramāṇācī saṅkhyā sāṅge śatakoṭī
urale te śevaṭī lāvī tukā 4

10 sadgururāye kṛpā maja kelī
parīnāhi ghaḍalī sevā kāñhī 1
sāṁpaḍavile vāṭe jātā gaṅgāsnānā
mastaki to jāṇā ṭhevilā kara
bhojanā māgati tūpa pāvaśera
paḍilā visara svapnā mājī 2
kañhī kaḷe upajalā antarāya
mhaṇoniyā kāya tvarā jālī 3
rāghava caitanya kēśava caitanya
sāṅgitalī khuṇa māḷikēcī 4
bābāji āpale sāṅgitale nāma
mantra dilā rāmakṛṣṇa hari 5
māgha śuddha daśamī pāhuni guruvāra
kelā aṅgikāra tukā mhaṇe 6

Since then up to his death in Śaka 1571, Tukārām led a life fully dedicated to God and the people around him. How his death took place is a mystery, for there was no trace of his body, after his death.

If we turn to the life of Basavēśvara, we find that he was blessed by God Saṅgamēśvara in the form of Guru, right from his birth. The proposed thread ceremony was a turning point in his life, which directed him to Kūḍala Saṅgama. Then he accepted the post offered by king Bijjaḷa in the interests of the faith he wanted to revive and to help the people to follow the right pathway to God. Here, I am reminded of the relationship of Shivaji with Tukārām. Shivaji had a great respect for Tukārām and he sent some gifts to him. But Tukārām returned them, saying, that they were of no use to him. At the same time, he sent him a message advising him how a king should behave and act. Here, I feel, that Rāmdās, who guided Shivaji in his duties, was temperamentally closer to Basavēśvara. Rāmdās and Basavēśvara were advocates of Pravṛtti. Basavēśvara preached and practised the principle of 'Kāyakave Kailasa' and Rāmdās said '*ādhī prapañca karāvā neṭakā*'. Tukārām did not preach *Naiṣkarmya* (renunciation), but he was more inclined towards Nivṛtti. While preaching, he always looked to the competence of the individual. '*adhikāra taisā karūnī upadeśa*' was his principle. That was why he advised Shivaji to perform his duties as a king and the common man to lead a life of piety and detachment.

Basavēśvara and Tukārām both felt alike the need for social reforms. Basavēśvara revolted against the Varṇāśrama Dharma and took his stand very boldly and bravely. He naturally had to face the opposition of the orthodox. The incident of the marriage of a Brahmin girl with an untouchable which sparked off trouble is well known. The Anubhava Maṇṭapa is also a concrete example of his reforms.

The Diṇḍi of the Vārkaris was like the Anubhava Maṇṭapa where there was no caste distinction. I should here make it clear that though the Vārkaris were on an equal footing at the door of the temple, yet in actual social life the usual distinctions persisted. An

untouchable saint like Chokhāmeḷā always stood at the door of the Viṭhala temple and never entered it. It was, in actual fact, in the words of Gurudeva Ranade, 'a spiritual democracy' but not a social one. The Brahmins had some privileges and, therefore, when Tukārām wrote poetry and preached philosophy, he was severely criticised and penalised by the orthodox. His Abhaṅgas were thrown into the waters of Indrāyaṇi. He invited the wrath of the higher class in society viz., the Brahmins, for his unremitting criticism. Despite such opposition some Brahmins however accepted him as their Guru ultimately.

Abhaṅgas and Vacanas

A critical and detailed study of the Abhaṅgas of Tukārām and the vacanas of Basavēśvara will reveal many similarities to us. They preached what they practised. They wanted harmony between words and deeds.[11] Their utterances are the records of their mystic experiences. Basavēśvara and Tukārām experienced the same pangs of separation from God and the same bliss of union. They were pained to see that men were too worldly and were straying away from the right path. Religion in practice came to be regarded as nothing but dogma. Both of them felt that Bhakti, and that too of dedication to only one God, would lead to salvation. Tukārām, like Basavēśvara condemned the people bowing before a plurality of deities. The devotee, they believed, must have a '*Sati-Pati-Bhāva*'; his Bhakti must be '*Avyabhicāriṇi*'. That was why Tukārām also compared the devotee's love of God with the real love between husband and wife. He declared that Bhakti was superior to caste. The *Karmakāṇḍa* was of no avail for salvation. He emphasized the need of purity of mind and rectitude in conduct. He, therefore, again like Basavēśvara, appealed to the people to eschew hoarding of wealth, womanising and other vices. The Nāma (God's name)

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11 *Tukārām:* bole taisā cāle
tyācī vandīn paule
Basavēśvara: Where action fitting to the word is found
There, truly, Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama dwells!

was the easiest means, according to both, to attain union with God. Like Basavēśvara, Tukārām also said that bathing in the so-called pure waters would not wash away the impurities of mind. Therefore, both of them pleaded that the fellowship of Śaraṇas or Saints should be sought. The preachings of Tukārām are summed up well in one of his Abhaṅgas.[12] Basavēśvara and Tukārām are the best illustrations of persons who practised what they preached. They were truly two great lovers and saviours of humanity.

PANDIT AWALIKAR

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12 jōḍoniyā dhana uttama vevhāre
udāsa vicāre veca karī 1
uttamacī gatī to eka pāvela
uttama bhogīla jīva khāṇī
para upakārī neṇe para nindā
parastriyā sadā bahiṇī māyā 2
bhūtadayā gāī paśūce pālana
tānhelya jīvana vanāmājī 3
śāntirūpe navhe koṇācā vāiṭa
vāḍavī mahatva vaḍilāñce 4
tuka mhaṇe heñci āśramāce phaḷa
paramapada baḷa vairāgyāce 5

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA AND SWĀMI VIVEKĀNANDA AS SOCIAL REFORMERS

In the Bhagavadgītā, which is a veritable stream of nectar ever flowing through the life of the Indians — a testimony to the visionary attitude of the Indian culture — the Divine Voice has proclaimed:

> yadyadvibhūtimatsattvaṁ śrīmadūrjitameva vā
> tattadevāvagaccha tvaṁ mama tejoṁ'śasaṁbhavaṁ[1]

When we look at the world with eyes free from prejudice we might find convincing examples for the above statement. It is not necessary that the Divine spirit should manifest itself in one particular way and in one particular form; it might do so in endless ways and forms. Basavēśvara and Vivekānanda are two of the individual forms in which this myriad-faced spirit has manifested itself.

Basavēśvara was born in Karnāṭak in the 12th century A.D. Since that was the age in which our sense of history was not as vigilant as it is now, we do not get clear and concrete details about his life, and sometimes what we do get is not completely genuine. The dense minds of the common people, which cannot see in the apparently ordinary day to day life of Basavēśvara the greatness and richness of his inner life, have tended to attribute many miracles to his life in order to augment its greatness. Perhaps one might take this attempt itself as symbolic of his true greatness. But sometimes these very pale and dry attempts to underline his greatness

1 Gītā X. 41

come in the way of his real greatness. But his 'Vacanas' can offer an honest and strong basis for an understanding of his inner richness and his social and religious thought. When we look at the achievements of Basavēśvara, even from this distance of 800 years, we feel that even though his life, according to the spirit of his times, was limited to Karnāṭak, from the point of view of significance and greatness he could easily be classed with the great world-spirits of all time.

The twelfth century witnessed an unprecedented revolution in the social life of Karnāṭak, and it was Basavēśvara who was the dynamic centre of this great revolution which brought a new awakening in the life of the common people. Before the advent of Basavēśvara the life of the common people was nothing but misery. Religion was the monopoly of a class. The common people groaned under the dark shadow of religious fear created by that class. It was Basavēśvara who strongly revolted against the unjust and evil deeds done in the name of religion, and who vowed to bestow on the common people the right to knowledge. Basavēśvara, assisted by a number of fellow idealists, started a gigantic social upheaval. Before Basavēśvara, never was there such a revolution in Karnāṭak—why, in a sense, in the whole of India — that took place on such a large scale and with such great speed. The two creeds, Jainism and Buddhism, which had similarly revolted against the evil exploitation of the common people by Brahmanism, and had struggled to give to the common people the right to religion, had broken away from the Hindu religion. Basavēśvara, on the other hand, kept himself within the bounds of Hinduism and fought against the evils of Brahmanism. He, thus, uplifted the masses and secured for them a place of honour in society. It appears that such a revolution did not take place anywhere else in India. From this point of view, Basavēśvara is a pioneer who tried to establish fraternity and equality, not only in Karnāṭak but also in the whole of India.

The conditions of society that formed the background for the rise of Basavēśvara in the 12th century were also to be found in the 19th century in the whole of India. Indians, groaning under the

tyranny of the British rule, had lost their sense of individuality. Hinduism had degenerated into foolish superstition. With no worthy men to preach to the people its invaluable tenets, the fire of Hinduism lay unnoticed behind a layer of ashes. The intellectuals, naturally, disregarded their Indianness and took to imitating the British. At such a time Vivekānanda appeared on the scene. Born in Bengal, with a tremendous spiritual power inherited from his Guru, Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa, Vivekānanda awakened not only India but the whole world. At the sound of his clarion call the Hindu society threw off its sleep and went forward with new enthusiasm and new ideals.

The greatest defect of Hindu religion is the perversion of Varṇa system. The Divine Voice says in the Gītā:

Cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa karma vibhāgaśaḥ.[2]

There it is said that the four Varṇas were created by God himself. So the Varṇa system is not man made as it is construed by us today. There in the Gītā it is clearly said that the four Varṇas are created on the basis of guṇa karma, *i.e.*, the quality of mind and work. So we should not divide people according to their birth as we commonly do. Moreover, since the system is created by God, it is true not merely of India but of the whole world. Even in America, Russia and China, we find these four Varṇas based on one's vocation. We may also see in one and the same individual, though there is one dominating Varṇa in him, the expression of all the four Varṇas at different times of his life.

In course of time, the profound meaning of the Varṇa system degenerated. The edict of Gītā was thrown to the winds, and the evil system of judging caste on the basis of birth came into vogue. Thus, that which was the firm foundation of Hindu society became, on account of its gradual distortion, the very disease that corrupted the roots of Hinduism, impeding both our social and political progress. It is only Hinduism that is marred by the stigma of keeping a large section of society in ignorance for centuries together. Above all,

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2 Ibid. IV. 13

untouchability is a veritable curse on our society. This awful disease that spread viciously in our society became firmly regularised due to the sanction it got in the later Purāṇas, in which we find words like: "Pour molten lead into the ears of the Śūdra who listens to the Vedic recitations; cut off the tongue of the Śūdra who utters Vedic words and quotes from the Vedas; and kill the Śūdra who studies the Vedas..." It was Basavēśvara who revolted against such cruel prescriptions in the Purāṇas and brought the light of knowledge to the people of the lower classes, making it pervade all the nooks and corners of society.

> "The man who kills is an an Untouchable; the man who eats fith is an Untouchable. Caste, what is man's caste? The Śaraṇas of Kūḍala Saṅga, who wish the good of all created beings, are the only high-born people."

This is the comprehensive definition of caste that Basavēśvara gives. About those who believe that all the greatness of caste lies in mere ignorant performance of rituals, Basavēśvara says:

> "I can't bear to hear the words of thewrong-doer who says that ones' duty towards God lies in the way one eats and dresses, one's Caste-duty lies in the way one gives and takes. The only good conduct is to regard as one all the devotees of Śiva, notwithstanding their earlier castes like Brahmins or Sūdras. Any deviation from this is bad conduct."

With regard to those who wear the mask of religion and follow the easy path of superficial rituals, without acquiring the inner essence of religion, which could be got only by constant labour and faith, Basavēśvara says: "They say caste is lost in the way one eats and dresses. But what have you to say about those 'low-born' who seek caste in the way one gives and takes? How can you call them devotees? How can you say that they are worthy...?".

Before he preached these ideas to his society, Basavēśvara rendered himself a living example of his ideals. Himself, born in higher caste, he first gave up his caste-pride; with a total disregard for caste and creed discriminations he mixed with the common people, ate with them, and respected them as fellow devotees. We see that

in many of his Vacanas he mentioned with great respect men like Ḍōhara Kakkayya, Aṁbigara Cauḍayya, Haḍapada Appaṇṇa. The adjectives prefixing the names suggest their professions and castes. That was the age in which even to associate and eat with them was considered profane. But the godly mind of Basavēśvara generously disregarded all this and befriended the humble and the low caste people.

The revolution that Basavēśvara led reached its climax in the marriage that he brought about between the children of Madhuvarasa and Haraḷayya who were born in the Brahmin and Śūdra Castes respectively. The society of the age considered such mixing of Varṇas as sin. But Basavēśvara proceeds with great courage: 'One is a Brahmin and the other a Śūdra — so what? Both belong to one sect since both are Śaraṇas, Devotees, there is no difference between them.' But the society, 800 years ago, could not tolerate the dazzling light of Basavēśvara's ideas. It got tremendously disturbed. The Brahmin priests, whose hearts were bitter with rage, incited the political forces of the times against Basavēśvara's revolution and made them commit many heinous crimes. The tragedy that follows is a dark symbol of the pitch reached by the evil of caste-prejudice in Hindu society.

Vivekānanda, too, has severely criticised in a variety of contexts the miserable condition of Hindu Society, caused by the caste system. Once he flared up and spoke excitedly to a disciple of his:

> "So long the Brāhmaṇās have monopolised religion, but as they could not hold their ground against the strong tide of time, go and take steps so that one and all in the land may get that religion. Impress upon their minds that they have the same right to religion as the Brāhmaṇas. Initiate all, even down to the chanḍālas, in these fiery mantras. Also instruct them, in simple words, about the necessities of life, and in trade, commerce, agriculture etc. If you cannot do this, then fie upon your education and culture, and fie upon your studying the Vedas and vedānta."[3]

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3 The complete works, Mayavathi Edn. 1924, part V. p. 297.

What Vivekānanda said today was anticipated and practised by Basavēśvara hundreds of years ago.

Vivekānanda says in some other context:

> "The present religion of the Hindus is nither the path of knowledge nor that of reason — it is 'Don't-touchism' — 'Don't touch me!' 'Don't touch me!' that exhausts its description. See that you do not lose your lives in this dire irreligion of 'Don't-touchism.'"[4]

About the injustice done in the name of religion, Vivekānanda says with bitter sarcasm:

> "There is no harm in touching the non-Brāhmin classes when it serves one's purpose, and when you have done with it you bathe, for the non-Brahmins are as a class unholy and must never be touched on other occasions! Monks and sanyasins and Brāhmaṇas of a certain type have thrown the country into ruin. Intent all the while on theft and wickedness, these pose as preachers of religion. They will take gifts from the people and at the same time cry, 'Don't touch me.' And what great things have they been doing.?"[5]

Vivekānanda aspired to raise in course of time the whole of India to the status of Brahminhood. He felt, 'we have set aside the common men and consequently caused our country's downfall; and now it is our duty to encourage the common people, liberate them and emancipate them.' He gave with his own hand the sacred threads to a number of persons. In his great missionary community and among his millions of disciples we find people of all sects and castes, who do not cherish any caste distinctions.

In this way both Basavēśvara and Vivekānanda attempted to free society from the pernicious effects of the caste system. But if we look at it not from the ideological point of view, but primarily from the point of view of practice, we see that Basavēśvara had gone a step further than Vivekānanda. There are reasons for this: In Vivekānanda's times, the world had come closer and his area of activity spread far and wide. What Basavēśvara had to achieve in

4 Ibid. Pt. VI. p. 288 (1921).
5 Ibid. p. 286.

the face of governmental and social opposition, had already, by the time of Vivekānanda, been accepted by the Government through legislation. The society, too, under the influence of new thought currents produced by contact with the West, had come to accept it at least on the ideological level. But the conditions in Basavēśvara's times were different. Both society and the Government in those times were not ready to accept it even on the ideological level, let alone on the level of practice. The mixing of castes was a treachery against the king as well as against the society. It was one of the king's primary duties to see that purity of caste was never violated. Even during such severe times Basavēśvara undertook, with great courage and tenacity, his mighty task of liberation; he fraternised the untouchables and secured for them an elevated position in the society.

There are examples of other great men too who had similar principles and attitudes and who entertained disciples from the lower castes. But it is difficult to find a man like Basavēśvara who went out to them himself and started on a large scale the revolutionary task of building a casteless society based on the rejection of Varṇāśrama structure. But, as days went by, this great Basavēśvara was confined to a small sect by his followers, who reduced him to a sectarian image. If the work had continued in the same strain, probably, there would have been no Hindu-Muslim problem, nor the Christian problem such as that in Nāgāland. But the revolution which Basavēśvara led against the evils of Brahmanism went into the hands of his followers and became a rival religion, instead of becoming a mighty force of opposition.

Mahatma Gandhi spent his whole life fighting against untouchability. If we, who survive the Gandhian age, ask ourselves conscientiously, we would realise the tremendous significance of Basavēśvara's achievement.

The '*Kāyaka*' or Work doctrine is another precious gift that Basavēśvara gave to society. No profession is low; the high and the low do not lie in the profession but in man's mental attitude. With devotion and faith one can turn any profession into an instrument

of salvation. In society every one must earn his own bread. "The body of a Śivayogi should never exert in vain." This attitude is basic not only for the progress of a religion and economic stability, but also for a country to achieve self-sufficiency and equality. Today, this attitude is most essential for the progress of our country. Although we have achieved political freedom we have not achieved psychological liberation. The feeling of the high and the low towards professions, the attitude of looking down upon manual labour, are still very strong. This attitude naturally leads to idleness and lethargy, and this is not a sign of a healthy society. Every individual is endowed with a certain amount of power, and if that power is not channelised for some creative work, it would turn towards something destructive. This is one of the main causes for the many events that are ruining our country. The '*Kāyaka*' or Work doctrine offers a solution to all these problems. Respect for work, respect for the self, and interest in work are most essential for a nation's prosperity.

The Śaraṇas gave respect to every kind of profession. They never discriminated. Basavēśvara says "......one who heated iron rod became an iron-smith, one who washed became a washerman, one who wove became a weaver, one who read the Vedas became a Brahmin...... So, O Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva, one who has achieved union with the Liṅga is alone a high-born." So, a mere profession is not a criterion of man's caste or his conduct. We have seen how Basavēśvara honoured people of different castes and professions as Śaraṇas. Mōḷigeya (Wood-cutter) Mārayya, Kuṁbāra (Potter) Guṇḍayya, Mādār (Cobbler) Cannayya, Bēṭegāra (Hunter) Saṅgayya, Mēdāra (basket-maker) Kētayya, Agasara (Washerman) Mācayya, Aṁbigara (Boatman) Cauḍayya, Suṅkada (Tax collector) Baṅkaṇṇa, Samagāra (Shoe-maker) Haraḷayya etc. Just because they became Śaraṇas they didn't give up their professions and take up priesthood! Most of them proudly flaunted their professions by prefixing them to their names, as though to challenge the caste-ridden society.

Sister Nivedita, the spiritual daughter of Swāmi Vivekānanda, has said the following things about her Guru, which might serve as a philosophical commentary on the Work doctrine:

"The many and the one are the same Reality, perceived by the mind at different times and in different attitudes.

"It is this which adds its crowning significance to our Master's life, for here he becomes the meeting-point, not only of East and West, but also of past and future. If the many and the one be indeed the same Reality, then it is not all modes of worship alone, but equally all modes of work, all modes of struggle, all modes of creation, which are paths of realization. No distinction, henceforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conqur is to renounce. Life is itself religion. To have and to hold is as stern a trust as to quit and to avoid.

"This is the realization which makes Vivekānanda the great preacher of Karma (detached action), not as divorced from, but as expressing Jñāna (self-knowledge) and Bhakti (love of God). To him the workshop, the study, the farmyard, and the field are as true and fit scenes for the meeting of God with man as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple. To him, there is no difference between service of man and worship of God, between manliness and faith, between true righteousness and spirituality."

Vivekānanda often emphasises the significance of complete absorption in work. Vivekānanda himself was a great Karmayogi, who dedicated his entire life for a great mission. In a sense, the Karmayoga, propounded in *Geetopanishat*, took a simplified form and assumed, on the level of social practice, the name of '*Kāyaka*', Work doctrine.[6]

Basavēśvara's rational intellect that fought against social superstitions is another thingt hat goes well with our modern attitudes. That was the time when there was a rooted belief in the sanctity of antiquity. People never thought of testing everything on the touchstone of one's own reason and conscience. Basavēśvara revolted against this attitude. He says in one context with great anger: "I

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6 karmaṇyevādhikāraste mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karmaphalaheturbhūrmā te saṅgo'stva karmaṇi — *Gītā II.* 47

kurvanneveha karmāṇi jijīviṣecchataṅ samāḥ
evam tvayi nānyatheto'sti na karma lipyate nare — *Īśa. Up.* 2

shall fight the Vedas; I shall put the Śāstras into shackles; I shall beat the back of Tarka till it is blue; I shall cut off the nose of Āgamas......."

Vivekānanda's rational and intellectual powers were always intensely alive. This is shown, for instance, by the following incident. Once, somebody asked him how one of his opinions differed from that of Śaṅkarācārya. Vivekānanda gave him a serene reply: 'Śaṅkarācārya was a man; you too are a man. You may think in your own way.'

Astrology is still playing havoc in our society. We see plenty of people seeking the assistance of astrology at every juncture of life. During the days of elections it plays an important rôle even in the field of politics. We read in papers how people who pose as great politicians secretly consult the astrologers. This is our idea today of manly endeavour! This kind of attitude kills our faith in ourselves, and reduces the country to a state of inertia. Basavēśvara satirised this attitude long ago: "You see, there was a clever snake-charmer who went with a woman (his wife) whose nose was defective to consult an astrologer about an auspicious time for his son's marriage. He met on his way another snake-charmer with another woman whose nose was defective and considered that as an ill omen. His wife has a defective nose and he has a snake in his hand, O Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva, what can you say about such a puppy, who distinguishes himself from others, without understanding the difference between himself and others!" He says elsewhere: "O Saṅgayya, where is the auspicious union of stars and where the inauspicious impediment? O Saṅgayya, where is the defect and where the sin? Where is the Karma of rebirth (Bhava Karma) for one who constantly meditates upon you, O Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva?." That time is really auspicious during which one meditates upon God with all the heart and does one's work. Can the planets, stars, days and hours go beyond the omniscient and omnipotent God and do good and evil to us?

Basavēśvara built many institutions to propagate his ideas and to keep them alive in society. The Anubhava Maṇṭapa that he

established occupies a most important place in the religious history of Karnāṭak. There, equal status was given to everyone, with no discrimination regarding sex and castes. Basavēśvara, the king's Minister and Ḍōhar (untouchable) Kakkayya were regarded as equal there. One was a Minister and the other Ḍōhar only when they went out to do their respective jobs. The Śaraṇas tried to arrive at truth through intensive discussions and debates, and then strove to propagate truth and practise it in actual life.

Vivekānanda, too, recognised the necessity of working through institutions. He brought together his fellow Sanyāsis and disciples and established a great organisation called 'Shree Ramakrishna Mission.' He was convinced that instead of living like traditional Sanyāsis they should engage themselves actively in the service of their nation. Through his mission centres, spread out through the length and breadth of the country, he did all kinds of things from lecturing to tending the poor and the diseased, to starting Libraries, Hospitals, and Schools, and infused a new dynamic spirit in the entire society. Even today that organisation does a great deal of work, silently and quietly, on the basis of the ideal preached by Swāmi Vivekānanda:

'ātmano mokṣārtham jagaddhiktaya ca'

for the salvation of one's own soul and the good of the world.

In this way, though their essential basis was spiritual, both Basavēśvara and Vivekānanda laboured hard for the emancipation and progress of society. They uplifted the society which had got stuck in the sands of bigotry of various creeds in the name of religion, inspired its spirit with pure spiritualism, uprooted the Varṇāśrama system and eradicated the chaos created by casteism, and, thus, became the great power of regeneration of the universal religion of the Vedānta.

IM
(Under the direction of K. V. Puttappa.
And
rendered into English by S. K. Desai)

There are gods, and gods, and gods:
some melt within a tongue of flame;
some are cheap,
and are sold for a song;
some hide underground,
and dangers pass them by.
O save me from these deities false,
thou only one,
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama!

ŚRĪ BASAVĒŚVARA AND ŚRĪ AUROBINDO

It would be rather difficult to compare two personalities who are born, bred up and who worked under different set-ups and are also separated by a wide gulf of eight hundred years. But as great spiritual leaders, Śrī Basavēśvara and Śrī Aurobindo have some aspects in common. A political turmoil, confusion in the religious field, despair of the common man as to the path to be followed regarding individual and collective salvation — these seem to provide a common background for the work of these two men of God. Before the advent of Śrī Basavēśvara, humanity was pining for a message which would be unequivocal and full of hope as to the destiny of man. Such has been the case with regard to Śrī Aurobindo. An integral transformation in the minds of the individuals as also in the society around was the dire need before the advent of these two spiritual leaders. Both of them found the people of their age struggling towards ends which had no abiding value about them. In other words, the people were groping in the dark. A new light had to be shed. In the first half of the 12th and the 20th centuries respectively Śrī Basavēśvara and Śrī Aurobindo came and gave us light.

Śrī Aurobindo sets out his goal in life very clearly in his famous letter addressed to his wife, Mṛṇālinidēvi:

"I have three madnesses", says Śrī Aurobindo, "firstly it is my firm faith that whatever virtue, talent, higher education, knowledge and wealth God has given me belongs to Him. I have the right to

spend only as much as is needed for the maintenance of the family and on what is absolutely necessary. What remains should be returned to the Divine."

"The second madness: by whatever means, I must get the direct realisation of the Lord. The religion of today consists in repeating the name of God every now and then, in praying to Him in the presence of everybody and in showing to people how religious one is. I do not want it. If the Divine is there, then there must be a way to experiencing His presence; however hard the path, I have taken a firm resolution to follow it."

True to his resolution, Śrī Aurobindo followed the hard path and did achieve the direct realisation of the Divine. His path has come to be known as Pūrṇa Yoga. In the twentieth century, this is a rare achievement. Two other eminent sons of Mother India of this century *viz.*, Gurudeva Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi worked for and achieved Pūrṇa Saundarya (Beauty) and Pūrṇa Swarājya (Political Independence). While Śrī Aurobindo had to follow a hard path, what he has mapped out need not be so difficult for others to follow. Thousands of devotees of Śrī Aurobindo and the Mother, in and out of the Ashrama, are trying to follow that path and some of them successfully.

Śrī Basavēśvara left his parents and his home town at an early age with a view to having a direct realisation of the Lord. If he were to write a letter to his parents, the contents and the wording of the letter would have been similar to those we find in Śrī Aurobindo's letter, the extracts of which are given above. Śrī Basavēśvara found meaningless rituals and hollow metaphysical theories prevailing in the society around him. He felt disgusted with them. He would not compromise with the surroundings in which he found himself. So he had to leave his home as did Śrī Aurobindo. Śrī Basavēśvara firmly believed that his talent, virtue and wealth, if any, belonged to the Lord. He consecrated all that towards Lord Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva and His devotees. Kannaḍa literature is enriched by his pithy sayings known as vacanas. Here are a few sayings which beautifully illustrate the point mentioned above:

Honninoḷagondcreya, sīreyoḷagondeḷeya
Indiṅge, nāḷiṅge bēkendenādare,
Nimmāṇe, nimma purātanarāṇe
Nimma śaraṇarigallade mattondanariye,
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā.

"If of my gold a single streak or of my clothing a single thread I want for today and tomorrow, I sin before you and your ancient devotees. Except for the use of your devotees, I desire nothing, Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā."

Hottāre eddu kaṇṇa hoseyutta
Ennoḍaliṅge, ennoḍavege, enna maḍadimakkaḷigendu
Kudidenādare — enna manavē sākṣi!......
Bhavi Bijjaḷana gaddugeya keḷage kuḷḷirdu
Ōlaisihanendu nudivarayyā pramatharu.
Koḍuvenuttaravanavarige, koḍalammuve:
Hole holeyara maneya hokku,
Sale kaikūliya mādiyādareyū
Nimma nilaviṅge kudivenallade,
Ennoḍalavasarakke kudidenādare taledaṇḍa!
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā.

"If I, getting up in the morning and rubbing my eyes, begin to travail for the sake of my body, my wife and my children, be my conscience witness against me. The devotees blame me that I sit beneath the throne of the unbeliever Bijjaḷa and serve him. I shall give them a reply. I can give them one: I shall enter the homes of the deprived amongst the outcaste, I shall slave with my hands but it will be as service for the Lord. If I did it for the needs of my body take thou my head, my Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā."

Nānu ārambavamāḍuvenayyā gurupūjegendu,
Nānu bevahārava māḍuvenayyā liṅgārcanegendu,
Nānu parasēveya māḍuvenayyā jaṅgamadāsōhakkendu.
Nānāvāva karmaṅgaḷa māḍidareyū
Ā karmaphalabhōgava nī koḍuveyembuda nānu ballenu.
Nī koṭṭa dravyava nimagallade mattonda krīyamāḍenu;
Nimma sommiṅge salisuvenu, nimmāṇe,
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā.

"I take up to agriculture for the worship of my preceptors. I take up to commerce for worship of Liṅga, I serve others towards serving the servants of my God. I know that whatever work I do, you will give me the fruit of the work. What you give I spend for you. I do nothing else with it. I render unto you that which is yours. I swear this by you my Lord."

The second madness referred to by Śrī Aurobindo seems to have been the first one in the case of Śrī Basavēśvara. His intense aspiration in this behalf has been the predominant note in his utterances. This is rather natural as the expressions of the other aspects of his personality have not come to us either in ample measure or in an authentic manner. Śrī Aurobindo is known as a Nationalist, Journalist, Poet, Professor, Philosopher, Critic and a Revolutionary. While the personality of Śrī Basavēśvara has many facets, his utterances, in a large measure, refer to his God-intoxication. Every other activity of his seemed to have been subordinated to that one 'Madness' *i.e.*, direct realisation of the God. Some extracts from his sayings illustrate this fact:

'Kūḍala Saṅgayya olidānō, oliyanō eṁba cinte hāsaluṇṭu,
hodeyaluṇṭu'

"Whether Kūḍala Saṅgama is well-disposed
To grant his grace, or ill disposed:
Enough to spread beneath
And enough to cover over."

Vāravendariye, dinavendariye, ēnendariyenayyā!
Iruḷendariye, hagalendariye, ēnendariyenayyā!
Nimmuva pūjisi ennuva marede Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā.
"Lost am I to weeks and lost to days.
I know nor this nor that.
Lost am I to sun-set and lost to sun-rise.
I know not which is which.
Thy worship is all and myself is nought,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama.[1]

Cakōraṅge candramana beḷagina cinte,
Aṁbujake bhānuvina udayada cinte

1. Selected Sayings of Basava by C. S. Bagi, Vachana Maṇṭapa, Belgaum, v. 124

Bhramaraṅge parimaḷada banḍuṁba cinte,
Enage namma Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvara nenevude cinte.

"As the Chakora-bird pines for moonlight,
As the sun-flower waits
for the call of the dawn,
And as the bee hankers after the sweetness
in the bloom of the flowers,
My mind hovers over the thought
of Kūḍala Saṅgama."[2]

'Ayyā, ayyā,' endu kareyuttaliddēne;
'Ayyā, ayyā' endu oraluttaliddēne:
'O' ennalāgade, ayyā?
Āgaḷū nimmuva kareyuttaliddēne:
Maunavē, Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā?

"Lord, lord, I am crying; Lord,
Lord, I am wailing; O Lord
Why not answer in reply? I
Am always calling to you; why
Are you silent? Why do you
Not answer? O God, my God
Kūḍala Saṅgama."

Of the three 'madnesses' of Śrī Aurobindo, the third one is referred to by him in the following words.

"......I look upon my country as the mother, I worship her and adore her as the mother......I know I have the strength to uplift this fallen race: it is not physical strength, I am not going to fight with the sword or with the gun, but with the power of knowledge. God sent me to the earth to accomplish this great mission."

The times and the temperaments being different such a view as mentioned above is not shared by Śrī Basaveśvara. Śrī Aurobindo lived at a time when the foreign domination over India had become obnoxious and humiliating. An iron will and an inspiring confidence such as those displayed by Śrī Aurobindo were badly needed at that time. Temperamentally too Śrī Basavēśvara was of a different type. He was unassuming. He was an embodiment of humility. He described himself as the lowest amongst the low:

2 Ibid. v. 102

Enninda kiriyarilla, Sivabhaktarinda hiriyarilla
Nimma pādasākṣi, enna manasākṣi, Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā
enagide divya!

"Lesser than I there is none
Greater than the devotees of Śiva
There is none your feet are
Witness to these truths. My
Mind is witness. This is my
Ordeal, O Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva."

Humility or self abasement was, for Śrī Basavēśvara, the way to achieve the love of Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva: (Saduvinayavē Sadāśivana olumeyayyā). Though he was an embodiment of humility, yet his message constituted a tremendous force in the socio-religious life of Karnāṭak during the 12th century. Prior to Basavēśvara we had had enough of intellectual sallies as well as ethical preaching. They however seemed to have failed to ameliorate the lot of the common man. In order to make religion real there was prime need to construct religion on the basis of experience so as to enthuse the masses. Śrī Basavēśvara admirably satisfied such a need by founding the Anubhava Maṇṭapa (Spiritual Academy). Śrī Basavēśvara is the finest flower of the culture of Karnāṭak and his Anubhava Maṇṭapa can be likened to the finest flower garden of spiritual experience. It was a bold and imaginative step which proved to be a boon to the society of those days. Śrī Basavēśvara put religion on a democratic basis and with a deep foundation in action. He preached and practiced 'Knowledge in action.' For knowledge divorced from action would be futile. The society, Śrī Basavēśvara envisaged, consisted of people with a passionate love for God and for work. It was a viable and self-sufficient society which was his goal in practical terms. Truly it was to be a casteless and classless society comprising in harmony the several professions and services of the day. The following description is illuminating:

"Jēḍar Dāsimayya, a weaver, Śaṅkara Dāsimayya, a tailor, Madivāḷa Mācidēva, a washerman, Mēdār Kētayya, a basket maker, Aṁbigara Cauḍayya, a ferryman, Haḍapada Appaṇṇa, a barber, Ḍakkeya Bommaṇṇa, a drummer, Turugāhi Rāmaṇṇa, a cowherd,

Suṅkada Baṅkaṇṇa, a tax gatherer, Kinnari Bommayya, a goldsmith, Okkalu Muddayya, a farmer, Jōdhara Mādaṇṇa, a soldier, Ḍōhara Kakkayya, a tanner, Mādara Cannayya, a cobbler, Taḷāwāra Kāmideva, a petty officer under the village headman, Gāṇada Kaṇṇappa, an oil miller, Vaidya Saṅgaṇṇa, a physician, Kirāta Saṅgayya, a hunter, Nuliya Candayya, a grass rope-maker, Sūjikāyakada Rāmitande, a linen-draper, Malahara Kāyakada Cikkadēvayya, a dealer in and repairer of second hand articles, Bācikāyakada Basavappa, a carpenter, Sattige kāyakada Rāmitande, an umbrella holder, Kannaḍiya kāyakada Ammidēvayya, a mirror manufacturer, Kadira kāyakada Remmavve, a spinner, Koṭṭaṇada Remmavve, a paddy pounder, Āydakkiya Mārayya who lived by gleaning rice grains dropped in the fields"—these and others were the members of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa of Śrī Basavēśvara. So varied were their professions as also their respective status. But they were all treated as equals in view of their devotion to Śiva and their clean lives.

Inner purity was considered more important than one's birth or profession. With inner purity and devotion to Śiva as the basis, a new fraternity was established by Śrī Basavēśvara. Traditional idea of high and low was rejected and a new hope was kindled. People from several parts of India were attracted by the movement started by Śrī Basavēśvara. It is said that rulers and chiefs left their domains and came to Kalyāṇa where Śrī Basavēśvara lived and worked. Kalyāṇa, the then capital of Cālukyas became a nerve-centre of spiritual life just as Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama of Pondicherry has become one today. The 'Sādhakas' of this Ashrama work in several spheres of life so as to express the Divine. Their sense of surrender, devotion to the divine power, gentleness, quietness, cleanliness, dedication to work in any capacity, egolessness, the joy of life they express, the silent but perfect organisation and their catholicity of outlook, transparent sincerity and the unusual talents developed here would impress one that a new divine community is being fostered here. Every time I visit Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama, I feel that I am visiting Anubhava Maṇṭapa in actual practice. The divine presence is felt here as must have been at Anubhava Maṇṭapa.

We learn from Vīraśaiva literature that the then king of Kashmir gave up his kingdom and came over to Kalyāṇa and settled there with his queen to participate in the work Śrī Basavēśvara had started. The King undertook the humble duty of selling faggots in Kalyāṇa. There are other similar incidents mentioned. We know it as a fact that well-placed persons and high ranking I.C.S. Officers gave up their privileged positions to join Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama and to work there in humble capacities. The new luminous path shown by Śrī Aurobindo has brought about a wonderful change in the outlook of the people, both individually and collectively as was the case with Śrī Basavēśvara.

Anubhava Maṇṭapa was a spiritual academy just as Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama is one. But spiritual life did not mean for Śrī Basavēśvara and Śrī Aurobindo renouncing material life or one's normal duties. Śrī Basavēśvara insisted that no one — not even the priest — had a right to feed oneself unless one put in one's daily quota of work. Of one's earnings, only the minimum required for a simple daily sustenance was to be spent and the rest made over to the Divine. This was the principle of 'Kāyaka' brought into force by him. In Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama every able bodied 'Sādhaka' is required to put in about eight hours' daily work in any one of the several services obtaining at the Ashrama. The task pursued is not necessarily of one's choice either. One can engage oneself in silent meditation, recreation and physical exercise (which is compulsory) only after putting in the required quota of work. While engaged in one's work, one is not expected to go into silent meditation. Ashrama provides for the material needs of the Sādhakas and there is no question of the earnings for the individual's upkeep. 'Work is bodily prayer' for the Ashramite just as 'Kāyaka' was for the followers of Śrī Basavēśvara. Both Śrī Basavēśvara and Śrī Aurobindo preached and achieved the dignity and love of labour by giving spiritual significance to work. Apart from being a spiritual power house, Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama is engaged in producing wealth and providing material services and in developing various talents. Something like this was being done at the 'Anubhava Maṇṭapa' also. It was housed in the

Mahāmane (Great House) of Śrī Basavēśvara, and for the residence of the members caves were cut in the nearby hillocks. We can still see the ruins of these in Basava-Kalyāṇa of Bidar District.

About 1500 inmates of Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama are residing in about two hundred houses belonging to the Ashrama which has 'The upkeep and construction Services' with 'Hollow Bricks', 'Concrete Blocks' and 'Ceramics sectons' attached to it. A list of some of the departments and services run by the Ashrama should make an interesting reading.

Sanitary, Water supply, Electric Domestic service, Furniture, Tailoring, Laundry, Footwear services, Kitchen and Dining room, Washing section, Dispensary—allopathic, Ayurvedic, dentistry, surgery, X'ray unit, Nursing home, Massage clinic,—Bakery, Poultry, Oil-mill, Flour-mill, Fuel service, Farms, Orchards, Flower services, Dairy, Workshop, Foundry, Automobile service, Transport service, Weaving services, Embroidery, cottage industry, Handmade Paper, Printing press, Publications, Library, Reading Room, Nursery school, Higher education school, International Centre of Education; Photography, Painting, Theatricals, Dancing, Music, Band, Orchestra, Films, Post office etc.

From this long list one can have an idea that the Ashrama is not an abode of ascetics or idlers but a dynamic centre of comprehensive human activities as well as intense spiritual 'Sādhana'. Being modern, Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama comprises the latest services. Consistent with the needs of the time the 'Mahāmane' of Śrī Basavēśvara was functioning on similar lines. Śrī Basavēśvara emphasised that it is not by running away from material life, that one can live a spiritual life. Developing one's faculties and living a good life are conditions precedent to spiritual life:

Martyalōkaveṁbudu kartārana kammaṭavayyā
Illi salluvaru alliyū salluvarayyā,
Illi salladavaru alliyū sallarayyā.
Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvā.

"This mortal world is the House
that mints the will of the Master.

To be current here
is to pass currency there too;
The unfit indeed
Are uncurrent aeverywhere,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama."[3]

According to Śrī Basavēśvara, 'The world of Immortals is not exclusive of the world of mortals.' But one has to live the material life, as is also emphasised by Śrī Aurobindo, with a new consciousness. Egolessness, inner purity and outward cleanliness, integral surrender to the Divine, way of equality, aspiration, love, deep devotion and ceaseless worship — these are the basis of spiritual development as preached and practiced both by Śrī Basavēśvara and Śrī Aurobindo.

The teaching of Śrī Aurobindo does not concentrate on soul alone. Emotional parts are considered as purposive formulations of the Divine meant to manifest the Divine truth. It is, therefore, that Pūrṇa Yoga of Śrī Aurobindo includes all the parts of the man and operates on all levels of being with divine centre as the basis. What is of utmost importance in spiritual life is to find the divine centre and concentrate on it. This, as far as I have been able to see, is the core of the teaching and practice in Śrī Aurobindo Ashrama. This, I believe, was the case with the Anubhava Maṇṭapa of Śrī Basavēśvara. Every other religious ritual, formality or proclamation are meaningless unless they help us towards this central ascent. Thus remains the pith of their message even if there be any distortion on the part of the followers of the teachers.

The destiny of man, according to Śrī Aurobindo, is to manifest the Divine. In his Pūrṇa Yoga, the following three movements are included

1. Turning to and finding out the individual divine within.
2. Identification with the universal Divine.
3. Growth towards the transcendental Divine.

'Liṅgāṅga Sāmarasya', the core of the teaching and practice of Śrī Basavēśvara has also, I feel, the above mentioned three movements included in it. The 'Iṣṭaliṅga' concept helps the individual to realise the Divine. The 'Prāṇa Liṅga' develops the sense of

3 Ibid. v. 57.

universal Divine. By concentrating both on 'Iṣṭaliṅga and Prāṇa-liṅga' the follower of the Ṣaṭsthala philosophy is led to realise the 'Bhāva Liṅga' the transcendental Divine. Ṣaṭsthala philosophy has six stages. One begins with the Bhakti (Devotion) stage and ultimately ascends the Aikya (Unity) stage. The 'Aṅga' (the purified body) *i.e.*, the individual consciousness, by stages ascends the ladder and is finally merged into 'Liṅga' (universal, transcendental Divine). 'Lingāṅga Sāmarasya' *i.e.*, the merging of the individual with the universal, transcendental Divine is the destiny of man, according to Śrī Basavēśvara. This is the Ascent. The concept of a descent of the *superamental* into the physical world is, of course, a distinct contribution of Śrī Aurobindo. According to Ṣaṭsthala Philoospy, first there is the Descent of the Divine power in the form of the mateiial creation and then an ascent of an individual towards the Divine. The supramental Philosophy of Śrī Aurobindo rejects all asceticism and his yoga is directed towards capturing the Supramental Force of the Supermind to recreate a divine world upon earth. With the descent of the Supermind into the Mind our mental consciousness will be transformed into *Gnosis* and man, freed from the limitations of consciousness, will be changed into the Gnostic Being. Achieving harmony and unity of the individual consciousness with the universal Divine is the common factor in the teachings of these two spiritual leaders.

Yet another significant common factor is, that it is not just the teaching but providing a practical organisation by which the followers found themselves able to live that philosophy. The 'Anubhava Maṇṭapa' and the 'Ashrama' have been the centres where the teachings are put into practice. The two teachers were spiritually charged to a great extent. As such their impact on their environments had been most fruitful. The traditional paths of salvation *viz.*, Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna have been harmonised in their teachings. Nor did they favour the traditional asceticism. They accepted the material world as a practical field for realising the spiritual ends. For them, the kingdom of God was not a distant ideal. It had to be established here on earth and now. Towards that end a life of

negation would not do. But it is an integral view of life that is essential. The 'Sādhana' also has to be integral. The six stages in the Ṣaṭsthala philosophy are not to be exclusive of one another. Even when Śrī Basavēśvara ascended to the 'Aikya Sthala' he did not give up the 'Bhakti Sthala'. Work, devotion and knowledge were not mutually exclusive in his case.

"Knowledge, Love whose secret word is delight, power and unity" says Śrī Aurobindo, "are some of the Names of God." "But", he continues "though they are all divine, yet to follow any one of them exclusively is to invite....His departure from us and denial; for even unity exclusively pursued ceases to be a true oneness......we cultivate knowledge with a severe aloofness and austerity to find at last the lotus of heart dulled...... What can be more divine than Love? But followed exlcusively it is impotent to solve the world's discords...... The men of power may say that they have done a more tangible work......than the souls of love, but it is vain advantage. For, they have not even tried to raise us beyond our imperfect humanity...... The world's discords have to be understood, seized, transmuted. Love must call power and knowledge into the temple and seat them beside her in a unified equality; power must bow its neck to the yoke of Light and Love before it can do any real good to the race."

Real good to the human race, it must be acknowledged, has been done alike both by Śrī Basavēśvara and Śrī Aurobindo. For they understood the discords of life and transmuted then in a true harmony. They combined in themselves, knowledge, love, light, power, equality and unity. They have shown us the way towards that end. We have the sayings of Śrī Brasvēśvara and the Ashrama of Śrī Aurobindo before us. With their teachings and practice, the vale of woe this earth could be turned into a new heaven.

While they were detached from the material life, they did not renounce life. Man has taken this material body, says Śrī Basavēśvara, only to achieve the grace of the Divine (Kūḍala Saṅgamadēvana olisa banda prasāda kāya). In this statement Śrī Basavēśvara sums up the aim of human life on earth. Śrī Aurobindo states that

man has taken this material body only to manifest the Divine. To achieve the grace of and to manifest the Divine is the only worth while endeavour on the part of the human race. Without such an endeavour, humanity will be groping in utter darkness. In one of his beautiful poems, 'Ahana', Śrī Aurobindo depicts the strife and the troubles of the human race. There are, he says, Hunters of joy, the seekers after knowledge, the climbers in the quest of power toiling up the slopes. But they are all frustrated. Then descends on the world, 'Ahana,' the Dawn of God proclaiming:

> "Son of man, thou has crowned thy
> Life with flowers that are scentless
> Chased the delights that wound.
> But I come and midnight shall sunder."

It is such assurance we have from Śrī Aurobindo and Śrī Basavēśvara.

S. S. MALWAD

The eye that sees Him can see nothing besides;
All hearing is lost to the ear that hears Him;
The hand that is busy for Him cannot worship;
And Mind cannot meditate if He use it.
The End of all ends is Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.‡

BASAVĒŚVARA AND GANDHIJI

Only at long intervals there arise in the world rare personalities who with the example of their lives and teachings guide erring humanity to nobler paths. The light shed by these luminaries shines like a beacon light on a dark and disordered world. The message of these persons is for the whole of the humanity and not for any particular country or community. It is the appearance of these bearers of divine light which gives a meaning to the common humdrum lives of men and women. Basavēśvara, or Basavaṇṇa as he is affectionately called, of the 12th century and Gandhiji of our own times belong to this exalted band of supermen of supreme wisdom and universal love.

In comparing these two rare spirits and in trying to understand the essentials of their teachings we have to take note of the vastly different ages and surroundings in which they lived and worked. That the impact of the life and teachings of Basavaṇṇa is mostly felt in Karnāṭak and some surrounding areas is due mainly to the lack of means of communication and transport in the 12th century. Gandhiji living in an age of railways, aeroplanes, telegraph, radio and newspapers could naturally make his influence felt not only in India but throughout the globe. But both of them are undoubtedly kindred spirits having the sole aim of propagating truth and goodness, counting no sacrifice too great in the task they had undertaken.

Basavaṇṇa and Gandhiji were both men of God having for their ultimate aim bringing the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Their

object was the moral and spiritual regeneration of each individual and not merely the economic and material welfare of the people. Both of them may be said to be mighty leaders of religious movements. But here it is necessary to note the points of distinction between them.

There is no authentic biography of Basavaṇṇa. Good many myths and legends have grown round his name. But from his sayings which are called vacanas and from mythological poems in Kannaḍa dealing with his life and work we can construct a fairly plausible account of the events in his life. We have, on the countrary, a large volume of literature concerning the life and teachings of Gandhi. He himself has revealed the inner workings of his mind and the various vicissitudes and problems of his life in his autobiography and his voluminous writings. We thus get minute details regarding his life.

Basavaṇṇa is regarded by nearly five millions of his followers as a divine incarnation — an incarnation of Nandi. He is revered and worshipped as the deity, his very name Basava being regarded as a potent mystic mantra. Good many miracles are attributed to him and from some of his vacanas it would appear that he did miracles. Deification of saintly and religious leaders and attributing miracles to them is to be seen in all parts of the world in all times. Even in modern times we can cite the examples of the followers of Śrī Rāmakrishna and Śrī Aurobindo who claim both divinity and miracles with regard to their masters.

Gandhiji never claimed that he had any special divine revelation or that he could work miracles. Attempts were indeed made by some of his credulous admirers to deify him and put up claims that he had actually worked miracles. But he severely condemned such attempts and told his admirers that 'he wore the same corruptible flesh as any other God's creatures and that it was a blasphemy to attribute divinity to him'. Although he is widely known for his great work in politics and social reforms he was essentially a man of religion. His aim in life was to attain deliverance — Mokṣa through the service of humanity. "I claim to be a man of faith and prayer, and even if I was cut to pieces, God would give me the strength not

to deny him but to assert that he is."[1] says Gandhi. Similarly although Basavaṇṇa's work in the field of social reform was of vast dimensions and astounding results, showing the path of God realisation to humanity was his main task. Both these supermen were ardent devotees of God—'God's eager fools',[2] whose actions often appeared to ordinary men as strange, sometimes even mad.

Basavaṇṇa was a mystic singer and at the same time a practical realist. In his Vacanas we can discern the different stages of the mystic's progress towards the ultimate goal of union with the Lord. We also get resplendent accounts of the visions he experiences. Gandhiji can hardly be called a mystic inspite of his references to his inner voice. Just as he did not claim to have any special revelation he did not also claim to have any mystic visions. We may not call him a mystic; but there cannot be any doubt that he was a man fully steeped in religion. His fasts and penances, his prayers at strictly regular hours and his complete reliance upon God in all his actions conclusively show that he was immeresed in the spirit of religion — religion in its universal sense and not in the sense of a sectarian creed.

It is remarkable that these two men of God were great heroes in action. It is rarely found that mystics and saints are also men of action. They sing of the ecstasy of their mystic visions and pursue their chosen path of God realisation in their own way — often living apart from the hurry and scurry of the world. But Basavaṇṇa and Gandhiji were both revolutionaries whose work has left a permanent mark on the life of the nation. Basavaṇṇa revolted against the social order of his day and brought into existence a strong well knit community based upon the ideas of equality and fraternity. Gandhi revolted against the political and social order of his times and brought about vast changes in the life of the nation, using an altogether new technique which is unique in the history of the world.

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1 Young India, 8-12-1927

2 His fools in vesures strange
God sent to range... *W. H. Hob*

The individual is given the supreme importance in the Indian tradition. According to some modern ideologies the nation or the community is all important and the individual is just a number, an entity of no importance. Such an idea never found favour in our systems of philosophy which consider each individual as potentially divine. The moral and spiritual advancement of everyone is as important as the collective good of the community. Or to put it differently, collective good results only when the individuals improve morally. True to our tradition both Basavaṇṇa and Gandhi were primarily concerned with the problems of the individual. They both exhorted the people to reform themselves rather than try to reform the community as a whole. Complete surrender to God and a life of moral purity are the recurring themes of their teachings.

Unlike many other prophets and saints Basavaṇṇa and Gandhi were both householders, living in society, discharging the obligations of a householder. A life of total withdrawal from the world and its activities was not considered necessary for attaining the spiritual goal. Both of them were married men with children but they led a life of intense activity. Basavaṇṇa had the onerous duties of a minister to King Bijjaḷa and Gandhi led the struggle for Indian independence. But in the midst of these strenuous activities they could practice just as intensely their devotional exercises. To them worldly activity was also a part of their *Sādhana*. Work was worship to them. "He who does well here in this world will do well in the other world also",[3] says Basavaṇṇa. "I am an humble seeker after truth and bent upon finding it. I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical is directed to that end"[4] says Gandhi.

There is a striking similarity in the capacity of these two great men to attract persons of various types and conditions and evoke supreme loyalty from them. Drawn by the fame of Basavaṇṇa, people from different parts of the country flocked to Kalyāna.

3 Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu, ed. by S. S. Basavanal, v. 155.
4 Young India 11-9-1924.

Among them were princes and paupers, learned men and illiterate rustics, high born ladies and ordinary working women and perhaps, cranks and faddists — all of them actuated by the one aim of deriving spiritual benefit by their contact with the Bhakti Bhaṇḍāri — the keeper of the treasury of devotion. There were also men and women of various castes from the socalled highest to the lowest.

Gandhiji's coterie was also constituted on similar lines. In his Ashram were persons of various castes, classes, creeds, races, religions and nationalities. There were princes and millionaires as also paupers and ascetics. There were perhaps some cranks and faddists. As Gandhiji himself humorously remarks "I have been known as a crank, faddist, madman, evidently the reputation is well deserved for, wherever I go I draw myself cranks, faddists and madmen."[5]

We can easily imagine that Basavaṇṇa drew huge crowds whereever he went. There is evidence to show that even during his lifetime he was regarded as a divine incarnation, the leader of a new religious and social movement and the greatest exemplar of Śivabhakti — devotion to God. The phenomenal crowds which Gandhiji drew wherever he went have become known throughout the world. It is indeed a modern miracle that this humble little man with no worldly possessions, temporal authority or extraordinary intellectual or artistic ability could command the reverence of such vast multitudes of men, women and children. Without any pretensions of holiness or godliness on his part Gandhi was considered to be the holiest and godliest of men in his time. In our country it is the holy men and not warriors or statesmen who receive universal homage.

But both of them remained completely unaffected by the adulation of the masses. They retained their natural humility and simplicity and were irked to a degree by the adoration of the multitudes. Basavaṇṇa expresses his reaction in the beautiful vacana "My own people praise and praise me and thus impale me on a golden stake. Such adulation pierces me like a dagger. If you are my well wisher

5 Harijan 17-11-1933.

put a stop to this senseless praise — O Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva."[6] In a similar vein Gandhi says "Truth to me is dearer than the mahatmaship which is purely a burden...... Often the title has deeply pained me; and there is not a moment I can recall when it may be said to have tickled me...... I am literally sick of the adoration of the unthinking multitude."[7] Both of them were unconscious of their greatness which is the mark of real greatness. But as is to be expected people praised them and adored them but would not act up to their teachings and examples. This has been the case throughout human history. It is easy to praise, to adore and to be emotionally moved; but when it comes to action it is quite a different story.

Basavaṇṇa and Gandhiji were both men of infinite courage and bravery and were ready to stake all and sacrifice all in pursuing the paths which they firmly believed to be the right paths. Our imagination staggers when we consider the tremendous task undertaken by Basavaṇṇa. To attack the citadel of orthodoxy with its established social order of the gradation of castes, with its traditionally powerful priesthood and with its royal support was the task undertaken by Basavaṇṇa and he achieved a large measure of success in this most difficult undertaking. Gandhi challenged the mighty British Empire with his novel method of Satyagraha and attained a large measure of success. Like Basavaṇṇa he also attacked orthodoxy and vested interests. All of Gandhiji's activities were directed towards helping the poor, the dispossessed, the disinherited, the despised and the depraved. He wanted "to wipe every tear from every eye." His vigorous campaign against the age old crime of untouchability and against the senseless restrictions of caste and creed — shook the Hindu society to its foundations. He also carried on an untiring battle against other kinds of social evils like drink, drugs, prostitution, gambling, corruption etc.

There is a striking similarity between the programmes of social reform as advocated by Basavaṇṇa and Gandhi. We can almost

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6 Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu, ed. by S. S. Basavanal, v. 386.

7 Young India 2-3-1922, and 1-11-1928

say that Basavaṇṇa is the forerunner of modern Hindu social reformers, in as much as most of the reforms which are considered essential in modern times were already advocated by Basavaṇṇa in the 12th century. Thus Basavaṇṇa's teachings have a great significance for Hindus of modern times. Removal of untouchability, abolition of caste, equal status for women, equal respect for all professions, dignity of labour, uplift of the masses — all these which appear modern in conception were brilliantly envisaged by the great religious leader eight hundred years ago. It is interesting to find that a French scholar Louis Renon has noticed the close affinity between Basavaṇṇa and Gandhi. He says, "on the whole we must look for Gandhi's forerunners in the leaders of sects, the men who 'cleared paths' and opened up ways. In the middle ages and upto the present there are examples of such men coming from all social and spiritual strata, gathering communities about them, adopting new gospels, sometimes trying to make their way in the social and political field by means which they invariably claimed to derive from the gospels. Such are Basava in the 12th century with the Liṅgāyats, Rāmānanda and Kabir in the 15th century and Nānak in the 15th and 16th centuries. But while these men viewed in terms of the locality and needs of the sect Gandhi conceived for India as a whole."[8]

Basavaṇṇa's aim was to bring into existence a well knit community in which the distinction between high and low, caste and caste were completely eliminated. The curse of untouchability had of course, no place in such a society. It was a revolutionary conception in those days; it is so even now. Gandhi attempted to remove the blot of untouchability from the entire Hindu community and in this mighty endeavour he staked his life more than once. Gandhiji's ideas on caste underwent some changes in course of time. He appeared to be an apologist of caste in the earlier phase; but ultimately, he became an ardent believer in the total abolition of caste distinctions among the Hindus. "Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know... But I do

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8 Vishwa Bharati Gandhi Memorial Peace Number p. 232, 233.

know that it is harmful both to spiritual and national growth"[9] says Gandhi.

However good the condition of Indian women might have been in the remote past, there cannot be any doubt that their status in the middle ages and even in recent times has been one of subordination to man. Basavaṇṇa gave equal status to women along with men. We find good many women mystics and vacana writers among the followers of Basavaṇṇa. Mahādēviakka's is a name to conjure with; she was an ecstatic singer of the mystic union with the Lord. In modern India no one has done more for the uplift and emancipation of women than Gandhi. He says "I am uncompromising in the matter of Women's rights. In my opinion she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by man. I should treat daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality."[10] The fact that we have ambassadors, prime ministers, and governers who happen to be women is, in no small measure, due to the forces released by the Mahatma.

Basavaṇṇa and Gandhi both set great store on honest work for each man. Basavaṇṇa wanted each one of his followers to work at something useful to society and earn his bread. Thus we find among his immediate followers men and women working at various kinds of jobs. There were weavers, cobblers, peasants, writers, tailors, officers and so on. Gandhi placed the greatest emphasis on work. "God created man to work for his food and said that those who ate without work were thieves."[11] These two men of religion and devotion drove people to incessant action. A life of mere contemplation or devotional emotionalism was never their ideal.

The Vīraśaiva movement headed by the great Basavaṇṇa was essentially a mass movement. The work of the previous Hindu religious leaders and propounders of philosophical systems was mainly directed towards the upper classes. The masses were indeed, influenced by their teachings — but only in an indirect way and that

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9 Harijan 18-7-1936.

10 Young India 17-10-1929.

11 Ibid. 13-10-1927.

too in a gradual manner. The highest scriptures were inaccessible to women, śūdras and ordinary Brahmins by birth only.[12] It was these very people — the masses who were Basavaṇṇa's main concern. Their moral reform and spiritual enlightenment was the task undertaken by him. That is why he popularised a new literary form of simple and homely Kannaḍa which is at once expressive and poetic. Before him in Karnāṭak, literary compositions were either in Sanskrit or in high flown Kannaḍa both of which were not understood by the common man. Gandhi also wrote and spoke for the masses as his movement was mainly directed towards them. His writings in Gujarati, Hindi and English are in an extremely simple and lucid style. In Gujarati his mother tongue, he is regarded as the founder of a new literary movement having for its aim simplicity of language and moral appeal. "I want art and literature that can speak to the milions"[13] said Gandhi.

Many more points of similarity can be shown between the teachings of Basavaṇṇa and the teachings of Gandhi. Both of them were representatives of the highest and the best in Indian culture and tradition. They could, therefore, make a stirring appeal to the Indian people and command the following of the multitudes. They always stressed the basic values of Indian culture, like truth, non-violence, compassion for all living creatures, the supreme importance of spiritual balues, tolerance and work in a spirit of dedication regardless of the results.

The closing days of Basavaṇṇa were perhaps saddened by undesirable turn of events. His followers were angered by the acts of king Bijjaḷa and they planned to do away with him. It appears that Basavaṇṇa tried to restrain them but they would not heed his words. He, therefore, left the capital Kalyāṇa and sought peace at Kūḍala Saṅgama the holy place where he first found spiritual light. There in the bosom of his chosen Deity he attained samādhi

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12 Mahabhārata: strīśūdradvijabandhūnām vrayī na śrutigocarā.

13 Harijan 14-11-1936.

saying according to Harihara "O Father ring the curtain down on this play acting on the earth."[14]

Gandhiji's last days were also darkened by the deep tragedy. The architect of our freedom, the father of our nation was in deep distress when independence came to our country. Non-violence, communal harmony and Indian unity for which he had laboured all along lay shattered. The heinous acts of cruelty perpetrated in the frenzy of Hindu Muslim rioting, the division of the country and the prevailing spirit of violence and intolerance caused him profound sorrow and disillusionment. But he was not a man to give up his chosen task in despair. He continued his heroic work with super-human energy to the last breath of his life.

The question may be asked whether Basavaṇṇa and Gandhi succeeded in their missions. The answer will have to be both 'yes' and 'no'. These great prophets and supermen who make their appearance at long intervals never wholly succeed in reforming humanity. Men with their innate propensities for evil as for good are not completely transformed. But the influence of these men of light descends upon humanity like a benediction and a number of individuals shape their lives in the light shed by them. Speaking of Gandhiji, Rabindranath Tagore said "Perhaps he will not succeed. Perhaps he will fail as the Buddha failed and as Christ failed to wean men from their inequities, but he will always be remembered as one who made his life a lesson for all ages to come."[15] This can also be said of Basavaṇṇa and all the other great prophets of the world.

V. G. KULKARNI

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14 Sāku māḍai tanḍe lōkadāṭavaninnu
Harihara, Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe.

15 Vishwa Bharati Gandhi Memorial Peace number p. 13.

ŚARAṆAS AND HARIDĀSAS

The Bhakti movement in Karnāṭaka had two trends; one Vaiṣṇavite and another was Śaivite. These were the Pañca Rātra of occult Viṣṇu worship and Tantrism of Śiva occultism. Karnāṭaka mysticism developed on the background of the Bhāgavata, the Śāṇḍilya Sūtra and the Nārada Sūtra and the philosophical systems of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva and the mystic outpourings of the Tamiḷ Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite saints and the Bhaktas of Kashmir Śaivism. Vacana Sāhitya and Dāsa Sāhitya of the Middle Ages are the outpourings of the Bhaktas indicating their intense love of God. Some of the vacanas and Dāsapadas are of the highest lyrical quality revealing secular learning based on the experience of life's sorrows and an intuitive sense of the innate and an inextinguishable thirst of the human heart for Viṣṇu and Parameśvara. The Śaraṇas' and the Haridāsas' interests and concern in the world's beauty and in its natural manifestations are all sublimated and transmuted into an experience of absorbing interest in the Supreme Soul, representing the world as 'a hieroglyphic of the spiritual world.'

Intelligence alone is not sufficient for the reception of divine knowledge. The higher faculty of intuition which interpenetrates will and feeling and intellect, and which permeates the whole field of consciousness is desired, for it connotes the absence of contradiction, between divine knowledge and devotion and between the metaphysician and the saint, and indicates the certain road to self-fulfilment by absorption in divinity. There is a vision of the self and

the identity of self in Īśvara—the fulfilment of an ideal stage wherein nothing within stirs, and Reason and Intellect are transcended and wherein, as Plotinus says, 'There is no longer an awareness of beauty, for the soul has travelled beyond the beautiful and the very concert of virtues is overpassed.' The *Jīvanmukta* is thus beyond Reason, beyond the Beautiful, and beyond Virtue. The real basis of the Śaraṇa and Haridāsa Movements was not a vague fluctuating intellectualism but a firm ground of belief and conduct which was moral and not metaphysical.

The period between the twelfth and the sixteenth centuries witnessed not merely an examination of intellectual construction and Vedāntic and Upaniṣadic thought, but also a theistic religion of fervour and devotion. The School of Advaita was a *metaphysic* seeking a religion, and the Bhakti Movement was a *religion* setting aside learning and metaphysics in order to attain self-realisation. Reason is dualistic but love unifies by transcending thought; and though the monistic influence was strong, the saints preferred a more earthly road than the way of knowledge for the final release, as the exaltation and remoteness of the Supreme Soul and the impotence of the human soul, and the extremes of Transcendence and Immanence, accentuated a deep sense of an agonising need of fellowship with the creator. The need for some concrete centre for the religious life of the common people soon made itself felt, to correct the unchartered freedom of the classical religion. Thus the history of Śaraṇa and the Haridāsa Movements was a history of theistic instinct contending with metaphysical conceptions and realising the difficulty of reconciliation of Bhakti with dry metaphysics, established for all time, the primacy of love and devotion over all other paths of salvation.

Every religion that rests upon a basis of history is bound to assume varying shapes, according to the needs of men, just because it is something that satisfies the whole personality, answering the questions of man's reason, and responding to the demands of his conscience and his heart. Round about the core of that which is esteemed as eternal truth there will be a wide penumbra that is largely human

in its source and in the shape it assumes. If sacred books, sacred traditions, practices, truths and experiences do not answer questions in men's minds, and do not quench the thirst in their hearts, then they are sterile, intellectually satisfying but emotionally barren. They are rather an interesting philosophy than a living faith.

The movement was for Bhakti, 'loving devotion'. The word Bhakti though implied in Vedic Hymns, first appears in the Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad where Bhakti is recognised as something that can only with difficulty be reconciled with the prevailing monism of the Upaniṣads. With the appearance of the Bhagavadgītā, there was the assertion of the claims of a theistic worship; and from that time onwards, Bhakti took a high place among the religious moods of Hindu religion, and Bhagavadgītā vindicated the right of a theism that could arouse the ardour of a devout heart. The Gītā describes: 'of all worshippers the Mystic who worships me by way of devotion is the most dear to me.'[1] The Soul is in His own Self, for nothing can possess being apart from God. The Soul is an eternal entity and God and Soul and Nature form a triune unity.

The mystics are those who have their hearts centred in God and all their meditation is directed to Him who is adored and loved, and the passion of the soul of the mystic for the Supreme Being burns away everything that separates the Soul from the object of its worship and finds its own immortality in union with Him. This state of the Mystic is variously described by the Śaraṇas and the Haridāsas. The knowledge of God is of ultimate worth to the Mystic, for this is happiness or *Ānanda* that is the aspect in which the particular is resolved into the universal, the individual into the cosmic and the supreme moral value of goodness and holiness and blessedness is reached and realised by the resolution of the selfish into the altruistic. Those who completely control their mind and direct it unswervingly on a single point and then dropping it "remain poised and steady, the brain still, the senses asleep,

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1 Teṣāṁ jñānī nityayukta ekabhaktirviśiṣyate
priyo hi jñānino'tyarthamahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ — *Gītā*. VII. 17.

then there arises above the horizon of the mind a kind of consciousness recognised as Himself." The mystics who attain this condition are called Śaraṇas and Dāsas, who transmute human values into divine values and look upon all action as Divine Service, all knowledge as divine consciousness and all devotion as tastes of the divine. All human endeavour whether it be physical, intellectual or emotional is work that becomes worship, and the mystic soul partakes of the divine nature and is not *in* time and space but *of* time and space, *anavachchhinna — Kāla Dēśa*; and it works for the realisation of the Divine ideal of *Svarūpa*, *Guṇa* and *Rūpa* where the mystic consciousness is exempt from time, space and causality.

The Śaraṇa believes in the Reality behind the world of appearance. He has belief in unity and looks upon Reality as one and indivisible. Creation is not an illusion, but all natural phenomenon is a manifestation of the Divine who is beyond the reaches of thought, a *Svayaṁbu*. He knows the objective and subjective together, the synthesis of both held together in spiritual unity. It is the recognition of the Immanence of the spirit which is also transcendental, the involution of the spiritual universe in the objective and subjective spheres. The Śaraṇa seizes by intuition the one Reality, the way of *Yogasamanvaya*, a reconciliation of Jñāna and Bhakti Mārgas. The world of the Śaraṇa thus is *Samyakñjāna* within and *Śivasatkriyā* without in the phenomenal world.

The Ṣaṭathala Siddhānta of the Śaraṇas was the synthesis of the four-fold path of *Jñāna*, *Dhyāna*, *Karma* and *Bhakti*. *Sadbhakti*, *Niṣṭhā*, *Avadhāna*, *Anubhāva*, *Ānanda* and *Samarasa*; likewise, *Sucitta*, *Subuddhi*, *Nirahaṁkāra*, *Sumana*, *Sujñāna* and *Sadbhāva*, were also Ṣaṭsthala. Knowledge was virtue and there was no antithesis between Jñāna and Bhakti. Jñāna and Karma were all modes of approach to the Transcendental Advaitic and Dvaita notions of Reality and all these were reconciled in the ultimate category of divine love. God is described by Siddharāma, Basavaṇṇa and Allama in a language metaphysical and sublime: 'You alone know the glory of Thy Universality', invaluable, incomprehensible and invisible, a Liṅga without

beginning, without middle and without end. Allama says 'O Lord without mother and father, born out of yourself you have grown, indivisible and immutable for those who see differences, with a marvellous and transcendental history that is your own making.' Allama's vacana runs like this: 'become Bhakta by *love*. Maheśa by *niṣṭhe*, Prasādi by *sāvadhāna*, then Prāṇalingi by *svānubhāva*, by intuitive experiences a Śaraṇa with the attainment of *samarasabhāva*, and *Nirbhāvapada* and *Aikyasthala*. These are the stages by which the Śaraṇa reaches the Absolute.

The Śaraṇa seizes Reality with Intuition. If the divine life that keeps man alive and awake, active and cheerful, it is purity of heart that qualifies him for seeing God. This involves strength of will, and man is the embodiment of energy and a reservoir of will-power which helps him to make the world of living beings a Heaven of Peace. The power that drives the mill into action and gives it an insight into Reality is the feeling of Love in every finite creature and through this to God. Hence, Knowledge, Will and Love are interwoven into a single structure in the totality of human consciousness. Heaven is attained through right knowledge and right conduct and hell awaits those who are unrighteous. What enlarges and vivifies the soul in that direction are *nirahaṁkāra*, *sarva samatā bhāva*, *anukaṁpa* and *sabhyavartana*, selflessness, fundamental equality and brotherhood in all creation, all comprehensive and compassionate love to all sentient creation, undeviating rectitude and a life of good conduct and righteousness.

The Śaraṇas established the vital relation between the world and the spirit, between the temporal and the spiritual, the sensible and the supersensible, and between the earthly and heavenly spheres of Reality. They recognised a higher ideal and a deeper longing in the spirit of man and a higher view of the world, and harmonised means and ends, for the means adopted had to be commensurate with the magnitude of the splendour of the end in view and consistent with the renewal of an order of society built purely on a spiritual basis. To the Śaraṇas it was a question of realising one's self in its true nature and in its proper relation to the entire Universe of nature

and of society and of matter and of spirit. The reconciliation between the temporal and the Transcendental, between matter and spirit had to take place in society which meant the transcending of class and caste distinctions and building up the foundations of human solidarity based on brotherhood and love. The *rationale* of spirituality was work, and work without worship was blind, while whorship without work was barren, fruitless and even mischievous. All the Śaraṇas along with Nuliya Candayya have proclaimed that through *Kāyaka* or work alone, one becomes a Jīvanmukta and one becomes a Jaṅgama tearing off the veils of finitudes through work only. Neither wealth, nor woman nor matter is illusion but only the desires and cravings of the mind. To all the Śaraṇas, Bhakti is the foundation of *Kriyā* and *Jñāna samanvaya*, and the highest ideal of constant consciousness of God is to be realised by living a life of absolute harmony with that consciousness which permeates all creation.

A study of vacanas of the great Śaraṇas like Basavaṇṇa, symbol of Bhakti, of Cennabasavaṇṇa, symbol of Jñāna, Allama Prabhu, symbol of Vairāgya (renunciation) Siddharāma, the Karmayogin, and Mahādevi, the embodiment of Śarana sati and Liṅga Pati doctrine, impresses on the immensity of intuitive experiences of Īśvara and the purity of heart, humility, self-surrender, forgiveness, compassion and the love of Parameśvara which form the sum and substance of their teachings. There is an intense desire for fellowship as well as a desire for release from rebirth. The creed of the movement is an instinctive theism which craves for the satisfaction that comes from worship and from an intuition of divine love, and at the same time, an assertion of authoritative idealism or Advaitic Monism which is the logical consummation of devotional effort. Thus, the philosophy of their religion was Monism called Śakti Viśiṣṭadvaita perhaps inspired by Kashmir Śaivism and Pāśupata cults giving prominence to the unity of Śakti, (primordial Energy) with Parama Śiva. Śakti is Śiva's handmaid and is perfectly in harmonious relation with Śiva and Śiva is characterised and distinguished by His *viśiṣṭa* power or capacity to work which is only a phase of his *Prakāśa* in the form of *Vimarśa*. This religion accepts that the

Lord's creation is real and not an illusion. It rejects māyāvāda and proves that creation is the result of Śiva's miraculous powers.

The religion of the Śaraṇas does not make any distinction between men and women, and gives equal opportunity to both male and female, and repudiates Varṇāśrama Dharma which discriminates between the sexes and assigns differential duties. The Śaraṇas recognise the principle of universal brotherhood in matters of religion and society and opens out equal opportunities for both. The Saraṇas repudiate the claims of any particular caste or class for monopoly of the knowledge of the Scriptures and of spiritual culture. *Śiva dṛṣṭi* is not the exclusive preserve of any man or woman, but is the treasure trove for any body who makes any effort in that direction. The saint who lives outside society in a world of pure contemplation in constant communion with transcendental truths, undisturbed by suffering of less fortunate human beings arrogates to himself, a privileged position, a luxury which is sinful in its essence. Saintly detachment from suffering of fellow human beings and sentient creation, is a passive form of cruelty.

Basavēśvara and the Śaraṇas condemned elaborate ritual, worship of idols and offer of food to lifeless stone images without real devotion of the heart. The mission of the Śaraṇas was to destroy the walls that were created by the priestly classes and the theologians of dogma and superstition, between the transcendental world and society, between ends and means, between experience that is eternal and the experience of every day stream of life, and between religion and politics. He wanted to establish a state on which law and administration would be suffused with mercy and upon *ahiṁsā* upon non-killing, not injuring, not causing pain. It was not exaltation that he sought but loving kindness. He believed that every day's acts and deeds could be suffused with the elements of the Absolute Saṅgamēśvara, and that it was impossible to live and bear a world in which holiness was a sort of remote and isolated reservation which was beyond contact with the broad highways of life.

The Śaraṇa cut a new path, a new Dharma, a religion of tolerance, universal brotherhood and equality of all mankind and the

fundamental spirit of love and service of humanity and of unselfish action and ungrudging self-sacrifice. Basavēśvara and other Saraṇas spoke of man as essentially an effort *kāyakave kailāsavayya and dayaye dharmada mūlavayya* — and the character of that effort is ceaselessly and intently for penetration of the fleshly screen of Reality and for an insight into its heart and measureless feeling for the spiritual poverty and misery of his fellow human beings.

The fruit of effort was not sought but the purity, sanctity and spiritual splendour of *Manas*. Religion acquired a new meaning and the great teachings grew out of the discussions and debates and of the intuitive experiences of the Śaraṇas who by mutual contacts extended this inspirational religion. Anubhava Maṇṭapa was the ritual of the communion of souls and the symbol of soul's mystery emphasizing that man's spiritual inheritance was his participation in the great communion of humanity. It was love of God, of humanity and compassion for all sentient creation which was to become an abiding source of inspiration and guidance, three centuries later to the Haridāsas and other men of religion. 'No Cult in the world' writes L. D. Barnett with reference to Bhakti of Śiva 'has produced a richer devotional literature or one more instinct with brilliance of imagination, fervour of feeling and grace of expression.' The influence of loving devotion triumphed over the tyranny of caste and brought a great religious quickening and dynamics which had not been witnessed before. The incidental result of this movement was that it, more than any other influence, created the great vernacular literatures of India.

The Haridasas were heirs to *vacana* tradition. The Bhakti movement attained a new excellence under Dvaita Siddhānta and the Haridāsas who were mainly the followers of Dvaita philosophy. Their Siddhānta like that of the Śaraṇas was an answer to the sophistries and dialectics of Advaita intellect and scholastics. The Haridāsa took the vow of absolute faith in Śruti, Smṛti, Purāṇa and Itihāsa. He was not only to restore the knowledge and wisdom of the Vedas and of the Upaniṣads and of the classics to recover the style of the ancients and the use of Sanskrit, but also to give an orientation and

an impulse to the great regional language which was Kannaḍa. Faith and prayer were the constituents of Bhakti and his religion was sublimated in close relationship with God and in friendship and fellowship with Him.

The Haridāsas comprised two divisions — Vyāsa Kūṭa and Dāsa Kūṭa. The followers of the former were required to be learned in the Vedas, Upaniṣads and other Darśanas with a constructive appreciation of the metaphysics and of the Avatāras or manifestations of Viṣṇu. The latter was to convey the message of Dvaita philosophy and religion of Hari through the vernaculars like the Śaraṇas to the masses. There was no philosophic or doctrinal difference between Vyāsa Kūṭa and Dāsa Kūṭa which were to convey the message of Madhva, founder of Dvaita philosophy and love of the divine Kṛṣṇa to those for whom the Vedas, the Upaniṣads and the Gītā were remote and incomprehensive. Śrīpāda Rāya, Vyāsarāja, Vādirāja and Śrī Rāghavendra may be described primarily as belonging to Vyāsakuta, while Śrī Purandara, Vijayadāsa, Gopāladāsa and Jagannātha Dāsa as belonging to Dāsa Kūṭa. Both the Śaraṇas and the Dāsas believed in a supersensuous and supra conscious Reality in the manifestation of new sense unknown to the human mind and that with the enlargement of the senses, expansion of the intellect and exaltation of the heart they would see new and ineffable visions of Reality full of love and significance. They likewise affirmed that the mystic sense is latent in everybody, and by cultivation could transcend the threshold of consciousness and intuitively see the Divine and thus be an *Aparokṣānubhūti*. The Dāsa was aware that the divine is realised within one's own heart, for Nārāyaṇa permeates within and without. Intuitional experience was within the reach of all, provided individuals made an effort towards it. To the Haridāsa the whole experience was a unity, and the whole world an Ānanda.

To the Haridāsa God is not merely Absolute, nor merely personal but a combination of both — Absolute and personal. Divinity is highest perfection—svarūpa, *svabhāva* and *rūpa*. He believed in the immanence of God in immortality and in God-realisation by love.

Mystical life was essentially ethical. Besides it was the firm conviction of the Haridāsa that God would manifest Himself when the individual soul craved for His company through music and dance. Of all modes of apprehension of God, music was the most effective and powerful, for Lord Kṛṣṇa was *sāmagāna priya* and both music and poetry are the Sādhana of Ādhyātma vikāsa and the philosophy of the Haridāsas was the realisation of paramātma through music and poetry and music was to be employed as the medium of communication of sublime thoughts of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads to impart instruction and enlighten the people on the path of spirituality.

Akṣobhyatīrtha, Vyāsarāya, Purandara dāsa, Kanaka dāsa, Guru Raghavendra, Jagannātha, Vijaya dāsa and other great Haridasas were, like the Śaraṇas, non-sectarian and were tolerant of all forms of belief and variants of Hindu religion. The world was not an illusion, but very real, as for the Śaraṇas. The *dāsas* were mystics and saw the manifestation of Keśava in the meanest creation as well as in the highest coloured by the attributes of God and partaking of divine powers, and accordingly made supreme efforts to reform the lower orders in society and to wean them away from ignorance, superstitions and barbarous practices, in order to favour the growth of Bhakti and devotion to God and to humanity.

The life of the Dāsas as of the Śaraṇas was a life of love and a life of faith and prayer. The Dāsas reflected in their compositions the grim realities of social life and by their critical examination prepared the individual for an escape from it to realise the divine through bhakti. The common people learnt at their feet the very essence of Vedic teaching given in simple, intelligible and lyrical language and sought the grace of Hari Sarvōttama. Through their songs and their voice they tried to correct the disparity between worldliness and other worldliness and revealed that Mokṣa and reward hereafter lay in the service of God through the service of mankind.

The great dāsas like Purandara Viṭhala spoke of the supreme importance of the incessant chanting of the name of the lord. There were Nirguṇa and Saguṇōpāsakas and yogis both on the nirguṇa

and saguṇa level. They had sound knowledge of human nature, with its contradictions and were convinced that grace of God alone would redeem man from the complexity of the web of life. They realised that birth was a great opportunity, life a great responsibility and that supreme effort should be made to overcome contradictions in nature and prepare it for the reception of the divine that there are eleven modes of approach for a Bhakta, and love of God was the easiest way to Reality. They believed in the establishment of a kingdom of righteousness through love and service, for, the conditions of the time in which they lived called for a constructive philosophy of action determined by a united people with an unqualified devotion to God. '*illi sulluvavaru alli salluvaru*' of Basavēśvara and '*īsabēku iddu jayisabēku*' of Purandaradāsa were the clarion call of a great prophet to awaken the people out of inaction and the dogmatic slumber of the Ages. It was a call for sanctification and consecration of oneself for the sake of humanity. It was a plea for a pure and virtuous living; for detachment from the body and for elevating the soul to the higher regions of existence by stripping off all its own lower nature and cleansing it from external strains and tensions. It was a message of hope for the common man, to live one's life in Truth, to practise virtue and love to all mankind and thus progress through integrity, unselfishness, responsibility and justice.

The Śaraṇas and the Dāsas by their rare humanity, personal example, great character, intutional and inspirational depths of soul, rare heroism, divine suffering and love and spiritual dynamics have lifted man from his animal existence to a pattern of human excellence; and by their sensitive discernment of the great values of life, have transformed the rawness and the hideousness of man's nature into sweetness and light. The transformation and transfiguration of the individual as a pilgrim on the high road towards sublime spirituality was the miracle the Śaraṇas and the Dāsas attempted to realise during their life time. India owes a deep debt of gratitude for this remarkable reorientation they gave to Indian thought and religion.

M. V. KRISHNA RAO

The world bit me like a serpent,
and the poison of five senses
made me senseless.
I reeled and fell on evil days.
"Oṁ, bow to Śiva" is the charm
I have been muttering since,
Oh Kūḍala Saṅgama.‡

ŚARAṆAS AND ĀḶWĀRS

India is a land of philosophies and mysticism. From the earliest days for many an Indian thinker life is a riddle and mystery. Life after death is still more a mystery. The quest after the highest reality which is the ultimate reality and the effort to gain an experience of that reality is of the utmost importance to an Indian mind. This he has called philosophy and religion to which his attention has been continuously focussed. Strictly speaking philosophical speculation is the result of deep thinking which finds no place in mysticism. Mysticism is the result of vast spiritual experience. From this life of struggle and never satisfied wants relief could be got by taking recourse either to philosophy or mysticism. But every religion recognises in mysticism an elevating and awe-inspiring principle which would tackle problems of life more effectually and truly than the logical arguments and scientific reasoning. But it is not all the same blind faith born of credulous belief. In India every school of philosophy developed a type of mystic belief and views of which the devotional mysticism tops them all. In the story of the development of the mystic principle, the devotional type, which is undoubtedly the last one, seems to have been the special type with the south Indian mystics.

Mysticism is a state of religious experience marked by supreme effort or efforts to attain direct communion with God. It is also the understanding of things divine by an unceasing process of spiritual insight and ripe spiritual experience. According to Goethe 'It is the

scholastic of the heart, the dialect of the feelings and mystic poetry is that kind of literature which contains a sacred and secret meaning incomprehensible to the ordinary reader but well cognizable by the spiritually minded persons.' That is though the subject matter is seemingly quite comprehensible there inheres a spiritual insight to be gained by penetrating the veil of mystic language.

India — to be more accurate — southern India (Tamiḷnāḍ and Karnāṭak) is specially proud in having had a band of gifted mystics and an ocean of mystic poetry in the second half of the first millennium after Christ. By about the 6th century in South India, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism became great rival faiths of both Jainism and Buddhism which had sway in the early centuries. As the fortunes of the faith depended largely or principally upon the persuasion of the ruler the exponents of different creeds vied with one another in their efforts to convert the rulers to their faith. But the Hindu Kings were not sectarians and under their rule conflicting religions flourished with harmony. Yet the enormous devotional poetry that flowed from the lips of the Śaiva Nāyanārs and the Vaiṣṇava Āḷwārs who lived in the age gave an extraordinary impetus to the growth of the Bhakti movement in the Tamiḷ land. Some two or three centuries later *i.e.*, by about the end of the first millennium after Christ when the influence of Jainism and Buddhism in the Tamiḷ country was nearly eliminated, the Brahmanic religion in its twin forms of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism was firmly established. The devotional poetry of the Śaraṇas (Nāyanārs) and Bhaktas (Āḷwārs) had general wide currency, and this movement spread into Karnāṭak also and found its supporters in the Vacanakāras and the Haridasas of Karnāṭak and left a permanent mark in that land also.

The Śaiva Nāyanārs (who were later on called Śaraṇas) and Vaiṣṇava Āḷwārs were simple-hearted Bhaktas rather than philosophical or theological scholars. To them the Supreme when approached in the first instance as Śiva or Viṣṇu was a beloved to be wooed with love and devotion, a king to be obeyed with simple reverence and affection. They very soon realized that the Supreme revealed Himself not to the proud intellect but to the hungering

soul that felt that without His grace it simply could not live. Religion became a simple poignant human experience of the individual soul and the Lord seeking one another so that they would have the joy of meeting in bliss. As a result of their teachings, the hitherto barred doors of felicity were flung wide open to the humblest of mortals who found to his amazement that he could now enter unafraid the sacred precincts and claim and share the fatherhood of God. These Nāyanārs and Āḷwārs were inspired God-intoxicated people who transmitted their divine infatuation through their hymns to millions of their contemporaries. Many of them were gifted singers. Their teachings and preachings besides were very attractive and effective and hence were able to leave a permanent impression on the minds of the people.

We owe for the collection and preservation of the devotional songs of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava saints of Tamiḷnād to the indefatigable labours of two religious leaders, Nambi-Andar Nambi and Nāthamuni. The former arranged the available Śaiva hymns into twelve Tirumurais. The first seven are collectively called Tēvārams and contain the hymns of Sambandhar, Appar and Sundarar. The eighth is called Tiruvāchakam and is the work of Manikkavachakar. The nineth is a miscellaneous collection caḷled Isaippa. The tenth is the outpourings of Tirumūlar a saint of the sixth century A.D. The eleventh is a miscellany of poems from Nackīrar to Nambi Andar Nambi. The twelfth Periya Purāṇam is a work — half history and half myth, which contains the lives of the sixty three Śaiva Saints is very popular and held in high esteem. Likewise Śrī Nāthamuni arranged the extant Vaiṣṇava hymns into a collection called Nālāyira Prabandham — a veritable treasure-house of devotional poetry. The four thousand hymns included in this collection are the works of the twelve Āḷwārs (of whom one is a woman mystic — Andal), the major contributions being those of Tirumangai Āḷwar, Nammaḷwar, Peri Āḷwar, Tirumulisai Āḷwar and Andal.

Tirumūlar is the earliest of the Saiva Saints. His work Tirumandiram is made up of 300 mantrams, enunciates the doctrine of pati — paśu — pāśam and emphasises the need of an ācārya for

achieving one's own Salvation. He is assigned to the sixth century.

About a century later Mānikka-Vāchakar and the other three śaiva samayācāryas — Appar, Sambandhar and Sundarar flourished in the Tamiḷ country. They preached the importance of self-knowledge and the implicit self-surrender at the feet of the supreme. These lived in the 7th and 8th century A. D.

Appar was a vellaḷa by caste (farmer) and was called Marul-Nīkkinar. He was once converted to Jainism and again reconverted into śaivism. His contribution to Tēvāram consists of 313 hymns which are conditioned by his agricultural calling and his ripe age. Sambandhar was a boy prodigy who passed away when he was in the prime of life. In this short life though he is credited to have composed more than ten thousand hymns only 384 are now available. They have an artless grace and sweetness of their own. Mānikkavācakar like Sambandhar was a Brahmin. His life is narrated in Tiruvilayādal purāṇam and Vadavurān purāṇam. Though he was a minister of the Pāṇḍyan king for a short while, he realised the values of life soon and dedicated himself to a life Divine. His work is called 'Tiruvāchakam', which is a hand-book of Mysticism. Sundaramurti was the last of the Nāyanārs. In a short life of 18 years he is credited to have composed thousands of hymns. But only a hundred of them are now extant. They are very popular and are sung by many even to-day.

These four Nāyanārs, namely, Appar, Sambandhar, Sundarar and Mānikka Vācakar are the exemplars respectively of the four main paths of devotion, namely, Dāsya marga, Satputra mārga, Sakhā mārga and Sanmārga. In addition to the works of the Nāyanārs there is the Periya purāṇam which is a stupendous work of over four thousand stanzas which gives a comprehensive account of the sixty three śaiva saints held in veneration even to-day. These saints are drawn from various castes and callings, Kings, Brahmins, Chieftains, merchants, farmers, shepherds, potters, weavers, hunters, fishermen, untouchables — all find place there including the women devotees like Tilakavatiyar, Punītavatiyar and Mangaiyakkarasiyar.

Now we pass on to the Vaiṣṇava Āḷwārs. The word Āḷwār has been explained as one with deep wisdom or one immersed in a spiritual sovereignity over the hearts of men. They are twelve in number. They are grouped into three categories as ancient, middle and modern Poykai Bhutattar, Pēyar and Tirumuḷisai form the ancient group. Nammāḷwar, Madhurakavi, Kulashekharar, peri Āḷwar and Andal belong to the middle group. Tondaradippodi, Tiruppāni, and Tirumangai are the members of the third group. According to traditional belief they are said to have lived between the years 4203 B.C. and 2706 B.C. But these traditional dates cannot he reckoned as historical dates. As it is impossible with the facts at our disposal to determine the dates of the Āḷwārs, we may be quite contented with the broad inference that in all probability they might have lived between the years 500 and 850 A.D. Therefore it is not unlikely that many of the Nāyanārs and Āḷwārs were actually contemporaries.

The Āḷwārs belonged to different parts of the Tamiḷ country. The first four were of the Pallava country, the last three of the Coḷa Dēśa, the others belonged to Cera and Pāṇḍyanāḍus. Āndal (one of the Āḷwārs) was one of the supreme women mystics of the world. It is also worthy of note that the twelve Āḷwārs even like the sixty three Nāyanārs or Śaraṇas are a cosmopolitan group, being gathered from all castes and various strata of society, their one common characteristic being their fellowship in the love of God. Nammaḷwar like Appar came from a vellaḷa family. Tirumaṅgai was a Kallar (robber). Kulaśekhara was a princely ascetic. Peri-Āḷwar was a brahmin. Tiruppani was an untouchable.

The Nātāyiru Prabhandam — the four thousand stanzas that constitute this work are divided into four more or less equal parts. The first thousand stanzas include the works of Periyaḷwar, Andal, Kulashekhara, Tirumolisai, Tondaradippodi, Tirupanni and Madhurakavi and is called Tirumoḷi. The second part called the Peria Tirumoḷi is the work exclusively of Tirumangai. The third part called Iyalpa includes the works of the first three Āḷwārs and the works of Tirumolisa, Nammaḷwar and Tirumangai. The last thousand called the Tiruvōimoḷi is exclusively the work of Nam-

maḷwar. These are pure devotional hymns in praise of Viṣhṇu in his various avataras. These are all based on the culture of the vedas and the purāṇas. Just like the Nāyanāras, the Āḷwārs also approached God in different ways of devotion. Nammaḷwar and Andal are specially famous for their madhura mārga and Periyāḷwar for Satputramārga.

Though these Nāyanārs and Āḷwārs did not preach any systematised philosophy, they laid the foundation for the future systems which were canonised by the later Ācāryas. The musings of the four Bhaktas, Appar, Sambandhar, Manikkavachakar and Sundarar were systematised by the corresponding Santhanācāryas, *viz.*, Meykaṇḍa, Arulanandi, Marijñāna Sambaṇdhar and Umāpati, through their sastric works, Śivajñānabōdam, ŚivajñānaSiddhiya and Śivaprakāśam. The system was called 'Śaiva Siddhānta' which admitted the three entities of pati—paśu and pāśam. These became real powers and reached the masses only when these teachers used the vernacular that is Tamiḷ language as the vehicle for their exposition of the sastras. Likewise Śrī Rāmānujācārya, on the basis of the teachings of the Āḷwārs, challenged the teachings of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, solved the problems raised by him and placed the Bhakti cult on a firm philosophical basis by expanding the doctrines of viśiṣṭādvaita which was a qualified form of Śrī Śaṅkara's monoism.

By about the end of the first millennium after Christ the Bhakti cult was firmly established in the Tamiḷ land and it spread in waves towards other directions also.

Basavēśvara was born in a place called Iṅgaḷēśvara Bāgewāḍi in the Bijapur district. He was a brahmin by birth. He refused to undergo upanayanam ceremony and embraced Vīraśaivism. He is a reformer of the first order and had the necessary introspection to be a reformist. He entered the service of Bijjaḷa of Kalyāṇa and gradually succeeded his uncle as the Minister. He set up the Anubhava Maṇṭapa which served as an academy of religious discussion and personal experience. Its president was the renowned Allama Prabhu. Chief among Basavēśvara's contemporaries were Cannabasava, Siddharāma, and the women mystic Mahādēvi-

yakka. All these were inspired devotees of Śiva and had direct communion with in some form or the other. They expressed their intense divine experience in a new vernacular literary form called Vacanas which are crisp, pithy and musical and hence very attractive. This gave rise to the growth of an enormous body of vacana Śāstra. It is supposed that as many as about 215 distinctive writers have contributed thousands of vacanas. Though the major portion of these is not available what little remains is enough to have an idea of its weight, amplitude and spiritual depth. As the aim of this devotional band was socio-religious reformation large groups of men and women were attracted to them, brought under their perview, irrespective of caste, creed and community. These in turn expressed their individual experience in the simple, spontaneous language of the people which indirectly helped the growth of the vernacular literature. After the Śaiva Nāyanārs of the Tamiḷ land these Bhaktas were also called Śiva śaraṇas the former being called the *purātanas* and the latter the *nūtanas*. Like the Tamiḷ Nāyanārs and the Āḷwārs, the Karnāṭaka Vacanakāras — Śaraṇas — indirectly laid the foundation of a new system of philosophy called Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita through their Ṣaṭsthala Siddhānta.

Vīraśaiva philosophy is called Śaktiviiśṣṭādvaita — a term which means the non-duality of God (para-Śiva) as qualified by power (Śakti). According to this system the Ṣaṭ-Sthala is the mode by which the devotee gradually merges himself in the supreme. According to Vīraśaivism para-Brahman is called Sthala. In him the whole universe exists and to him it returns at the end. Out of his own will and by the agitation of his innate power (Śakti) the supreme sthala becomes divided into Liṅga and Aṅga. Liṅga is Śiva and Aṅga is the soul. Śakti is also divided into Kalā and Bhakti. The former resorts to Śiva and the latter to the soul. Kalā is responsible for the projection of the world from Śiva and Bhakti leads the soul to real release.

As the Śaraṇas were mainly mystics and not philosophical thinkers they expressed their mystical experience through their vacanas to the common people without minding much the doctrinal

side, in the simple and mellifluous idiom of the peoole. Hence its appeal was dicrect and effective to the masses. That is to say, the Karnāṭaka vacanakāras followed the same path as that of the Nāyanārs and Ālwārs of the South and continued their work of emancipation of the masses in Karṇāṭak.

We may conclude this essay by pointing out certain common characterstic features of the Śaraṇas and the Āḷwārs. The first thing we notice in them is that they were non-sectarian in the sense that they were not affiliated to any particular creed. They were free from the bondage of any creed and followed no sacred scriptures. They attained illumination by individual exertion through freedom of thought and self-culture. They condemned polytheism and believed in one God and realized the unity of God invoked by various sects under different names. They believed in Bhakti as the only means of salvation and gave a very comprehensive interpretation of its conception. To them Bhakti meant single minded, unremitting devotion to God without an ultimate motive, growing gradually into an intense love. This love was akin to a love of man for near and dear ones and is graded into different categories such as that for a master, for a friend, for a parent, lastly of a passionate lover for his or her beloved. The Supreme — Goḍ is the source of all joys and the most beloved. God lives not only in temples but also in the heart of the Bhakta; and this physical body is His abode and hence should be very clean. The realization of all this and the approach through personal love and devotion alone form the foundation of religious life. This is not an easy task and requires the purification of the body and mind from all sin and impurity. All this naturally is hard to achieve without the aid and guidance of a Guru or a religious preceptor. Even a guru, however spiritually illumined, may not be able to lead one to salvation or final emancipation which ultimately depends upon the grace of God Himself. So a complete self-surrender on the part of the devotees is absolutely necessary.

These are in brief the essential principles propounded by these Śaraṇas and Āḷwārs through their hymns, prabandhas and vacanas. These brought home to the ordinary uneducated persons the universal

truths which were considered more valuable than sectatian doctrines. As a rule these saints preached in the language of the people to render their message easily communicable to the masses whose uplift was their goal. This noble object led them to do away with the distinctions of caste and bestow special attention on the degraded and depressed. Lastly they were responsible for realising the dignity of labour and giving equal status and opportunities to women in literature and society.[1]

N. ANANTHARANGACHAR

1 In preparing this essay, I am very much indebted to the different volumes: The History of Culture of the Indian people, pub. by the Bharateeya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.

Man, O man, you who sin the sin,
Man, O man, you who slay the saint,
Do say but once 'I bow'! ...
If you once say 'I bow',
All sinning flees away!
The golden mountains will not win
Full penance for your sins:
Do say 'I bow to One —
To our Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama'! *

BASAVA AND GORAKHNĀTH

I

In the realm of Indian spirituality the era between the 9th and the 12th centuries is of utmost importance. It is this era that produced not only great thinkers and philosophers of the calibre of Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmānujācārya and Madhvācārya but also saints, revolutionaries and reformers like Basava and Gorakhnath. It was an age of upheaval in the field of spiritual thought while accepted concepts were being re-examined, new ideas were taking root. Out of this chaos, the Bhakti movement was slowly taking shape. While Basava, with his dynamic personality, moulded the minds of men of the South of this great land, the genius of Gorakhnath was successful in bringing the vast multitudes of the North under the banner of Nāthpnath. Undoubtedly both these faiths left their imprint on the precepts and practice of the Bhakti movement. A comparative study of these two great personalities and their contribution to literature should prove not only fascinating but also enlightening to the students of religion, philosophy and literature. As such, this paper aims at giving a glimpse of their achievements.

II

As is true in the case of many poets, philosophers and seers of yore, nothing much is known of the lives of either Basava or Gorakhnath. Regarding the little that is known, the scholars have

agreed to disagree. However, it is generally believed that Basava was born in 1131 A.D. in a Śaivite Brahmin family of Bāgewāḍi, Bijapur District, of Mysore State. It is said that he was opposed to ritualism as practised in his family and later on he left home in protest. He embraced Vīraśaivism and entered the court of King Bijjaḷa of Kalyāṇa where by hard work and administrative ability he rose from position to position to become ultimately the Minister of the State. He tried to bring in revolutionary changes not only in the administration but also in religious and social fields for which the age was not ripe. Bijjaḷa as a king did not approve such revolutionary changes. Hence Basava left his post and retired from the political field. He spent the rest of his life at the feet of 'Kūḍala Saṅgama" as His devotee: By the political and social reforms he brought about, Basava rose in the esteem of the people to the extent that he was worshipped as the incarnation of Lord Śiva himself. To propound his spiritual precepts Basava founded an assembly of Śaraṇas by the name of "Śivānubhavamaṇṭapa" which proved to be a milestone in the evolution of Vīraśaivism.

On the other hand, Gorakhnath's life is so full of legends and folklore that it is well-nigh impossible to formulate anything definite out of them. Scholars fail to agree even on the time of Gorakhnāth. On the strength of available materials Dr. Mohan Singh places Gorakhnāth in the 9th and 10th centuries[1] whereas Acharya Hazariprasad Dwivedi puts him in the 9th century.[2] But George W. Briggs is not prepared to place him at any time earlier than 12th century.[3] Fixing his place of birth is neither easier. The tradition in Gorakhpanth is that he was born at Peshavar in the Satyayuga, at Gorakhpur in the Trētā, at Dwārakā in the Dwāpara and at Gorakhamadhi of Kathyavad in the Kali yuga. Bengalis claim it to be Bengal, Nepalees Nepal, Panjabis Panjab and Tibetans Tibet. On the basis of a couplet from the book 'Gorakh-sahasranāma' preserved in the Royal Library of Nepal, Acharya Hazari Prasad

1 Gorakhnath and Medieval Hindu Mysticism — Dr. Mohan Singh, p. 21.
2 Natha Sampradaya — Acharya Hazariprasad Dwivedi, p. 96.
3 Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis — George W. Briggs, p. 250.

Dwivedi has declared 'Badava' a village on the bank of Narmadā as the birth place of Gorakhnāth,[4] while George Grierson believes Gorakhnāth to have hailed from somewhere in the Punjab. Dr. Mohan Singh prefers the area around Peshavar.

According to Acharya Hazariprasad Dwivedi, Gorakhnāth was a Brahmin by birth,[5] while Francis Young Husband insists that he was a low caste Hindu.[6] Assamese tradition, however, declares that he was born in a weaver's family.[7]

As Basava was known by the names of Basavaṇṇa and Basavēśvara, Gorakh was also more familiarly known as Gorakha and Gorakhnāth. Some followers of the Vīraśaiva faith believe Basava to be the incarnation of Nandi, the vehicle of Śiva, while others go to the extent of calling him the incarnation of Lord Śiva himself. According to the Nāthapanth Gorakh also is considered to be Śiva incarnate.

The followers of the Vīraśaiva faith wear a Śivaliṅga on their person and therefore go by the name of "Liṅgāyats." They are also called "Liṅgavantas" and "Śivaśaraṇas."

The sect founded by Gorakhnath is known by various names, such as — Nātha Sampradāya, Nāthamata, Siddhamata, Siddhamārga, Yogamārga, Yoga-saṁpradāya, Avadhūtamath, Avadhūtha Saṁpradāya. The word "Gorakh" or "Goraksha" means either the protector of cow or the mother earth. A third meaning as the conqueror of the senses may also be read into the word. Similarly the word 'Nātha' means master and also Lord Śiva. Though Nēminātha, the Jain teacher and Vajranātha, the Buddhist monk are famous, usually the yogi-followers of Gorakhnāth only are known as the Nāthas. They also go by the names of "Kānphaṭa" and "Darshani"; Kānphaṭ, because they slit their ears and brand them with the kuṇḍali Mudra.

Nothing definite can be said either of the origin of the Nathapanth

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4 Gorakhnath — Acharya Hazari Prasad Divided, p. 96.
5 do do p. (iii)
6 Gorakhanath and Medieval Hindu Mysticism, Dr. Mohan Singh p. (iii)
7 do do p. 23

or its founder. After discussing at length Acharya Hazariprasad Dwivedi has arrived at this conclusion — "Prior to Gorakhnāth there were numerous Śiva, Śākta and Buddhistic faiths. After the advent of Islam this land was for many reasons divided into two conflicting spiritual groups. They called themselves Śiva, Śākta and Yogis. It is probable that Gorakhnath found them in two main groups. The first comprised those who followed the path of Yoga but were neither Śaivas nor Śāktas. The other consisted of those Śaivas and Śāktas who followed the Śaivāgamas but held themselves aloof from the Yogamārga of Gorakhnāth. Gorakhnāth accepted the latter into his Yogamārga rejecting the rest. Thus numerous pre-Gorakh-era Sects belonging to both the groups found their way into Gorakhpanth and, later on, were accepted as founded by Gorakh himself."[8] So, a number of previous concepts have gone into the making of Gorakhpanth. There are those who still believe it to be revised form of the Rasāyana School. The Nāthamata accepted the principles of Yoga and assimilated a number of concepts of the Buddhist Tāntriks, Gnāna and Advaitavāda from the Upaniṣads, on the one hand, and Bhakti on the other. The followers of this sect trace their preceptor directly to Śaṅkara himself. Since they believe him to be the Ādinātha all the Tantras of the sect originate from Mahādeva. It is said that Pārvati was the first disciple to whom Śaṅkara divulged the secrets of the Yogamārga.

Though the Nāthamata accepts only nine Nāthas in theory, their number is infinite in reality. The names of a number of Nāthas are similar to those of Buddhist Vajrāyana Siddhas. The following is the chronological order of the important Nāthas — Ādinātha, Machindranātha (Matsyendranātha), Gorakhnātha, Gahininātha (Gowninātha) Nivrittinātha, Gnānanātha, Jalundharanātha, Chowranginātha and Kanfinātha. It is well known that Gorakhnāth was the disciple of Matsyendranāth. There is a legend that once Machindranātha was lured by the pleasures of the flesh and he was promptly saved by his disciple Gorakhnāth. But according to a

8 Nātha Sampradāya — Acharya Hazariprasad Dwivedi, p. 147.

tradition, Gorakhanāth was the teacher of Machindranātha.[9] Perhaps this story gives a clue to the fact that Gorakhnātha waged a war against the immoral practices of the Vāmācāra sects.[10] After Gorakhnātha, the Nātha Saṁpradāya split into numerous sub-sects some of which exist in nooks and corners of the country.

The philosophical theories of Vīraśaivism have been propounded on the basis of the Śivāgamas and other works. But the essence of the tenets of Vīraśaivism can easily be found in the sayings of Basava and his followers, which are popularly known Vacanas in Kannaḍa literature. That is the reason why these vacanas are being termed as the "Vacanaśāstra." In these vacanas the Śivaśaraṇas have not only discussed the soul, Universe, Infinite, liberation and the path of liberation but have also tried to record in a very simple style their spiritual experiences which have stood the test of perception. Based on these masterly exposition, the philosophic precepts of Vīraśaivism could be summed up thus:

According to Vīraśaivism, more technically known as "Śakti-viśiṣṭādvaita", the Supreme Being is one, Īśvara. He is the eternal, the all-free. He is above creation, sustenance and destruction. He is indescribable, beyond the pale of words, beyond the reach of the faculties and impact and beyond all things. He is the great consciousness, the Supreme Being; He is the Infinite. In one of his Vacanas Basava describes him thus:

"Wherever I turn, you are present there; Oh Kūḍala Saṅgama Dēva, you are the Omnipotent, You are the limbs of the Universe, its eyes and face.[11] This Supreme Being is neither Viṣṇu nor Brahma, nor Śiva. He is above all of them; He is their Guiding Spirit."[12] Allama Prabhu, another illustrious Śivaśaraṇa, says: "You are that child who has neither mother nor father, You are self-born, You are the Swayaṁbhu, You are the Indiscernible."[13] He who

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9 Gorakhnath and Mediaeval Hindu Mysticism — Dr. Mohan Singh. p. 32.
10 Yoga Pravaha — Dr. Peethambardutt Badathwal. p. 59.
11 Vacana Dharma Sāra — M. R. Srinivasamurthi p. 1.
12 do do p. 18.
13 do do p. 81.

has been described as "Neti—Neti" by the Upaniṣads, has been depicted as the "Śūnya" by the Śivaśaraṇas. Though the Universe is a part of the Lord himself, it is not the Lord himself. Similarly the Lord is Omnipresent, but He is far reaching than the Universe.

In Vīraśaivism a number of word-symbols are in use. The soul is called "Aṅga". When this soul is sheathed in ignorance— "Avidya" — it becomes the jīva. As in the Śaiva Philosophy of Kashmir, Vīraśaivism also accepts the swāmya of Śakti. Śiva creates the Universe through his inherent Śakti. This Śakti is endowed with all the qualities of Śiva. She is the truth, the all seeing, the untainted. She is the Maheśvari. Under her own power she manifests herself in two forms — the Kalāśakti and the Bhaktiśakti. While the former works with the Liṅga to create the Universe, the latter helps the Aṅga or Jīva to smash the corporal bonds.

It is with the aid of this unique power of his Śakti, Śiva creates, sustains and destroys the Universe.

Vīraśaivas believe that Bhakti is greater than Śakti in as much as the former goads one to renunciation and the latter towards a worldly and active life.

Śakti creates sheaths and engulfs Aṅga removing it far from Śiva whereas Bhakti tears them into shreds thereby lighting up the darkness that Śakti brings about. The jīva has to liberate itself from all the guṇas in order to merge with Śiva. Eight aids, called the "Aṣṭāvaraṇa," have been fixed to help one in this process, they being — Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Prasāda, Pādodaka, Vibhūti, Rudrākṣa and Mantra. Similar to the Aṣṭāvaraṇa another aid comprising five actions called the "Pañcācāra" has also been prescribed. The Pañācñras are — Liṅgācāra, Sadācāra, Śivācāra, Bhṛtyācāra and Gaṇācāra.

The path of Bhakti in Vīraśaivism goes by the name of "Ṣaṭsthala Siddhānta." This path of the seeker is divided into six parts each going by a different name—Bhaktasthala, Maheśvarasthala, Prasadisthala, Prāṇaliṅgisthala, Śaraṇasthala and Aikyasthala. They could also be deemed as the six steps to attainment. Of these six steps the

final one is of utmost importance. The Ṣaṭsthalas are divided into two major groups, the first comprising Bhakta, Maheśvara and Prasādi and the latter, Prāṇaliṅgi, Śaraṇa, and Aikya. The former is action oriented while the latter is knowledge oriented. The first goes by the name of Karma Mārga or Sahamārga and the latter is known as Gnānamārga or Sanmārga. The worship of Iṣṭaliṅga is equally important in both the Mārgas. The first part instils reverence to Śiva while the latter communicates fundamental knowledge of Śiva which develops into spiritual experience. This experience will mellow into "Ānanda Bhakti".

In this six staged path of Bhakti, synthesis of Karma, Gnāna and Bhakti is evident. This theory of Bhakti is known as "Samarasasiddhānta" and, in fact, it could be taken as the quintessence of Vīraśaivism. In truth, Vīraśaivism is Bhakti-oriented.

The Philosophic theories of Nāthamata are contained in Haṭhayoga which is not very different from its ancient form. The scriptures of the sect declare this Yoga to be predominantly breath-control-oriented path of attainment. In his "Siddhasiddhānta Paddhati" Gorakhnāth has explained that the letter "Ha" stands for the Sun and "Ṭha" for the Moon, so much so, that Haṭhayoga means the confluence of these two stellar bodies. Moreover, Sun indicates the life-breath and Moon the Apāna Vāyu and from their confluence, the breath exercise (Prāṇāyāma) Breath-Control, which is nothing but Haṭhayoga becomes possible. Sun also stands for the vessel Īḍa and the Moon for the vessel Piṅgaḷa. Haṭhayoga consists in stopping breath from flowing through either of these vessels, but channelising it through the vessel Suṣumna. This Haṭhayoga is expected to give "Haṭhasiddhi" or instantaneous attainment.

Haṭhayoga is mainly concerned with the body in which exist three very powerful things which are usually wasted due to lack of concentration. They are — Bindu, or śukra, Vāyu, or breath and Mana, or mind. Haṭhayogis usually believe that control over any of these will bring the others also automatically under control.

The main aim of Haṭhayoga is the attainment of immortality or Śivattva. Śakti and Śiva are the two main forces in this philosophy,

of which Śiva is stationary and Śakti is animated. Since Śakti is the cause of birth and death, Yoga is directed in checking this destructive trend of Śakti and making it completely constructive whereby Godliness is attained. Śakti dwells below the naval and Śiva above it. At the lower end of the spinal column, Kuṇḍalinī, the symbol of Śakti is found in an inverted position, whereas Śiva dwells amidst the thousand petals of the Sahasrāra Cakra. In fact Śiva and Śakti are the symbols of the body and the cosmos. That which exists in the body does so even in the cosmos. The confluence of Śakti and Śiva is subtly described in the Nātha Saṁpradāya. In the spinal column of the human body there are three important vessels to carry the Prāṇavāyu. The one to the right is Piṅgaḷa and the other to the left is the Īḍa. They work alternately. The vessel in the centre is the Suṣumnā through which the Kuṇḍalinī Śakti moves upwards. The Yogi is expected to make it move upwards to meet the serene Śiva. "The moment Śakti merges into Śiva, this illusory creation automatically ceases to exist. Śakti exists in the body in the form of Kuṇḍalinī and Śiva takes his abode in the Sahasrāra Cakra. But Kuṇḍalinī is smothered by the weight of sins committed through the ages. If by Dhyāna and Dhāraṇa the breath could be purified and the vessels cleaned, the sacred Suṣumnā opens up giving access to the Brahmarandhra covered by the sleeping Prameśvari Kuṇḍalinī... When roused Śakti becomes one with Śiva, the Yogi attains Sahajasamādhi which resembles emancipation."[14] This is, in short, the philosophic theory of Nāthamata.

By a comparative study of the philosophical tenets of Vīraśaivism and Nāthasampradāya, the similarities of the path of attainment of both the sects become clear. It is of interest to note that the presiding deity of these two sects is one and the same — Paraśiva, the Absolute, the Infinite. The ultimate aim of both the sects is attainment of Samarasa, the confluence of Jīva and Śiva. In Vīraśaivism the stress is on the attainment of Bhakti whereas Nātha Sampradāya attaches greater importance to the physical achievements.

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14 Nātha Sampradāya — Acharya Hazariprasad Dwivedi — p. 130.

III

The sayings of Basava and Gorakhnāth are of great importance not only from the point of view of the sects but also from the literary point of view. Neither of the two great Masters created literature as such, but in their utterances the depth of spiritual thought, the truth of experience and the beauty of expression are found at their best, together with the charm of folk art and the elegance of fine literature.

The sayings of Basava have become famous by the name "Vacanas." They could easily be called poetry in prose endowed with an effortless beauty of metre, sentiment and rhetoric. Though numerous editions of Basava's vacanas are available, the best is "Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu," edited by Prof. S. S. Basavanaḷ. It comprises 961 vacanas. These vacanas discuss the nature of the Śiva-tattva, renunciation, knowledge, the greatness of the master, the characteristics of Śaraṇas, condemnation of pomp, idol-worship and ritualism, the greatness of Dharma, self surrender, uprightness, repentance, simple living and many other things. Basava's sincerity of purpose has made the vacanas unique and impressive. Dr. Mugaḷi, in his History of Kannaḍa Literature, has rightly remarked that the Vacanas are "Spiritual Lyrics" and "Springs of beauty flown from the peak of devotion."[15] In fact Basava's vacanas give us not only an insight into the philosophic doctrines of Vīraśaivism but also a knowledge of the form of highly ideal social life. They are scriptures and literature in one. In recent times they have been set to tune and sung widely together with the vacanas of other Śivaśaraṇas.

The sayings of Basava are set out in a language which is unique. By replacing the highly Sanskritised Kannaḍa by the tongue of the masses he imparted to it the prestige due to the language of the elite. The vacanas are written is a practical language which is not only simple and charming but also clear to the lowliest of the

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15 Kannaḍa Sāhitya Caritre — Dr. R. S. Mugaḷi — p. 159.

lowly. The style is logical and lucid. Basava and other Śivaśaraṇas through their vacanas brought about a revolution in Kannaḍa language and literature. Some of the vacanas dwelling on devotion, ethics, uprightness, etc., are used as epigrams and dance on the tongue of the masses.

It is believed that Gorakhnāth has written many works in Sanskrit and Hindi. Acharya Hazariprasad Dwivedi in his book 'Nātha Saṁpradāya' has mentioned 28 Sanskrit and 40 Hindi works of Gorakh and has discussed their authenticity in great detail. In the end he has accepted the following six books in Sanskrit as authentic — Amaroudhaśāsanam, Amanaska, Gorakṣapaddhati, Gorakṣa Saṁhitā and Siddhasiddhānthapaddhati. On the basis of a number of manuscripts Dr. Pithambara Dutt Badathwal has published a collection of the works of Gorakshanāth under the name "Gorakh-Bani" with commentary under the auspices of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad. Fourteen out of the forty Hindi works of Gorakh mentioned by Acharya Dwivedi have found place in this compilation. After examining the forty Hindi works Dr. Badathwal holds the opinion that "Sabadi" is the most authentic Hindi work of Gorakhnāth. "Gorakh-Bodh" is another very popular Hindi work of Gorakh in which the Philosophic doctrines propounded by him find place. This book is acknowledged to be of great value by Dr. Mohan Sigh. The different opinions that are held by Scholars on the works of Gorakṣa ultimately boil down to the fact that it is neither possible to pick out the original texts written by the Master nor is it easy to separate the later additions by the disciples who wrote in the name of their preceptor.

The Sanskrit works of Gorakh deal mainly with the philosophic doctrines of Nāthasaṁpradāya, but the Hindi works give a clear insight into the true personality of the Master. In these works not only the technique of the Yoga-cult described but the greatness of celibacy, of the Guru, of knowledge, of purity of mind, simplicity and renunciation and the futility of the scriptures and pilgrimage are depicted in a conventional style. The philosophic reflections of

the sect are expressed in these works as also the necessity for the ethical life of the individual.

The contribution of the Hindi works of Gorakhnāth to the enrichment of Hindi language and literature is invaluable. In the sayings of Gorakhnāth the earlier forms of the vocabulary of Khadi boli Hindi, which later on influenced the Santas (Poet-Saints) like Kabir, Dādu, Nānak are found in abundance. As a matter of fact, the Santas of Hindi have not only adapted a good number of technical terms of the Nātha Saṁpradāya but also have made use of the metres like Doha, Sabad, Pada employed by the Nātha yogis. The influence of Gorakhnāth on the Santas of Hindi, has been tremendous. It could justly be said that Santa literature in Hindi has its fountain-source in the sayings of the Nāthas.

The greatness of the personalities of Basava and Gorakhnāth can be better understood as revealed through their works rather than by philosophical doctrines propounded by them. Hence, the sayings of these two great Masters deserve most careful study.

IV

Both Basava and Gorakhnāth have given the primary place to the Guru in their mode of worship. Both have refused to accept ideas and principles unless they are tested on the touchstone of their own experience. The one and the only guide in acquiring this self-experience is the Guru and hence the pride of place for him in these sects. Says Basava:

"To the maker of a pot
    the clay is the first need;
To the maker of ornaments the gold;
To the seeker of the path of Śiva,
    the path of the Guru;
To the seeker of Kūḍala Saṅgama,
    the company of saints."[16]

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16 Selected Sayings of Basava — C. S. Bagi, v. 41

Guru Gorakhnātha also holds a similar opinion:

> "Oh Brother, accept a Guru, do not be without a Guru,
> Knowledge cannot be gained without a Guru,
> Even when washed in milk coal does not become white,
> By wearing a garland of flowers a crow does not become a Swan."[17]

Compassion has always been the fundamental concept of the mode of attainment in this land. So is it the essence of Basava's ideology. Basava asks:

> "What is Religion
> if kindness has no place in it?
> Kindness to all creatures
> is an undeniable urge
> and the chief source of Religion.
> Thus in sooth would Kūḍala Saṅgama have it
> and not otherwise."[18]

Gorakhnāth also has the same thing to say:

> "Can anybody be accepted as a scholar and gentleman unless the milk of human kindness does not overflow in his heart? Unless kindness does not pervade the heart, a person is nothing but a butcher."[19]

These examples are enough to prove the similarity of basic concepts in the ideology of Basava and Gorakhnāth. It is of great importance to note that both tried to attain Paraśiva, the absolute. Though their ultimate aim was the same, the means adopted to attain it were different. Basava was Bhakta par excellence. Although his mode of worship was individualistic it was not completely devoid of the mass element. In all his sayings a synthesis of the welfare of the individual and that of society is found. He not only strove for personal upliftment but also worked for the betterment of society around him. He wanted to rid the society of its evils with the help of Bhakti. Not only did he accept this theory but also gave expression to it in his vacanas. He established an assembly of Śivaśaraṇas

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17 Gorakhbani — Dr. Badathwal, p. 128
18 Selected Sayings of Basava — C. S. Bagi, v. 78
19 Gorakhbani — Dr. Badathwal. p. 239.

by the name of "Śivānubhavamaṇṭapa" with a view to discussing spiritual problems. He condemned casteism and class hierarchy and tried to eradicate all kinds of social evils. He laid great emphasis on the purity of personal life. When he found that people say one thing and do another he proclaimed:

"Until word and deed do not agree, purity of the heart is impossible. Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva dwells in the heart only when he finds that the word and deed do agree."[20] In his opinion — "Without the purity of soul, worship and ritualism are as futile as striking the anthill in an effort to kill a snake."[21] According to Basava heaven and hell exist in this world. He says — "Heaven and hell are not elsewhere. Utterance of truth is heaven and that of falsehood is hell; good conduct is heaven and bad conduct is hell."[22]

The path of worship preached by Basava is so natural that all can tread the same, irrespective of their capacity. In fact, it is the path of truth, of love and of bhakti. His heart was overflowing with compassion. That is why he considers himself a non-entity: "The devotees of the Lord are the highest of the high and I am the lowliest of the low."[23] Could there be a better example of devotion with humility?

Gorakhnāth was a great seeker and his mode of worship was mainly based on the Haṭhayoga. The main aim of Yoga is to gain control of the mind, as such, Goraknāth has in his sayings dwelti n great detail on the methods of practice of yoga. In the path of Yoga more stress is laid on inner purity, application of ethical principles and high ideals than on external actions. The attainment of eternal bliss, absorption of the self in the Self, beyond all dualism, is solely dependent on the power of self-control. That is the reason why Gorakhnāth has always stressed the importance of individual ethical life. Leading an upright life in the light of knowledge, meditation

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20 Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu — S. S. Basavanal. p. 9.
21 do do p. 32.
22 do do p. 66.
23 do do p. 87.

on the Absolute is the speciality of this path of worship. Though this mode of worship is individualistic, it does not neglect the society completely. It is a kind of Rāja Yoga of the Upaniṣads, open to all classes, requiring a mental and moral detachment. In fact, Gorakh advocated the middle path, or the Sahajamārga. He says:

"Laugh, play and be happy but never give yourself to anger. Laugh, play and sing but with a firm grip over your mind."[24]

"Enjoy the pleasure of the natural life and attempt to attain knowledge Divine. Avoiding the praise of one's own sect and condemnation of others, discarding futile discussion, the seer should attain ecstasy through self-realisation with firm belief in the words of the Master."[25] Gorakhnāth gives a lucid description of a life of self-denial: "Be moderate in eating, control sleep, never be sickly. Eating in excess leads to over stimulation of the sensory organs by which wisdom perishes and desire increases."[26] Gorakhnāth believed in the control of the mind and not of the body.[27] He has tried to describe "the greatness of that Supreme which is greater than both Rāma in his temple and Allah in his mosque." He has condemned the use of meat, wine and intoxicants in very strong terms: "Eating meat destroys kindness and devotion, consuming wine encourages delusion and addiction to intoxicants causes death-blow to meditation and wisdom. Wretches like this will pine away in Hell."[28] In short, Gorakhnāth, while advocating saintly life has unravelled the secret of Divine ecstasy through the path of yoga. Extolling the glory of human life Gorakh says: "Time and time again you will not be born a human; hence go and seek the feet of the Master."[29] This reminds us of the statement in the Upaniṣad: "Awake, arise and rest not till you attain the path of Guru." Though the path of yoga propounded by Gorakhnāth

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24 Gorakhbani — Dr. P. Badathwal, p. 3.
25 do do p. 6
26 do do p. 13.
27 do do p. 25.
28 do do p. 56.
29 do do p. 67.

is a path of negation, it has, nevertheless, the force to carry the whole society with it. Hence it could justly be said that this path of the individual has the welfare of the society at its heart.

V

This brief study of the personalities and the teachings of Basava and Gorakhnāth leaves none in doubt of the importance of a detailed comparison of the modes of worship of these Masters. In any history of Indian religious thought, both Basava and Gorakhnāth are sure to be given a prominent place. Both these masters brought about great reforms and put faith into thousands and thousands of their generation and established their respective creeds on a firm basis. Both Basava and Gorakhnāth preached monotheism or the worship of one God—Śiva; and both were in fact adored by their followers as the Avatārs of Lord Śiva. Basava and Gorakh condemned all kinds of ritual, idol worship, because they felt that these practices would lead men nowhere. Both were sincere seekers after truth and, as such, they felt a love for mankind which we see only in the greatest teachers of humanity. Love of man, compassion for fellow beings was the central point of the teachings of these two great leaders. This was the secret of their popularity among their followers.

It was worth noting that the common people of all kinds of pursuits came under the influence of Basava and Gorakhnāth—outcastes, shoe makers, washermen, cowherds, huntsmen were treated equally without any discrimination. It was remarkable that women, for the first time, obtained equal status with men in the scheme of social life according to Basava's teaching.

Basava and Gorakhnāth were great men of their age whose illustrious lives and teachings will light the path of humanity for all time to come.

HIRANMAYA

Time softens not the stone
immersed in water.
Even so, distracted mind
renders vain the time
spent in worship.
A spirit guards buried treasure—
but with what profit?
Such is my lot,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama!‡

SECTION : FOUR

This mortal world is but the Maker's mint;
Those who earn merit here, earn also there;
And those who earn not here, earn neither there,
*O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!**

VĪRAŚAIVISM AND KASHMIR ŚAIVISM

Introduction:

Śaivism is perhaps one of the most ancient living faiths of the world. It is identified with the worship of Śiva in the form of Liṅga. The finds at Mohenjodaro and Harappa have shown that the cult of Śiva and the worship of Liṅga existed as early as the Indus Valley Civilization which is considered to be pre-Āryan. Apart from its antiquity and extension of its influence we are familiar with Śaivism in India as a great and live religion with a potent philosophy behind it. Śaivism as a living faith in India may be broadly classified under three heads *viz.*, Kashmir Śaivism prevalent in the North, Vīraśaivism in the Deccan, Karnāṭaka and Andhra, and Śaiva Siddhānta in the Tamiḷnāḍ. Though there are differences inter se, as regards some of the tenets and observances of the three branches, yet we notice some fundamental principles operating as the common basis in all these systems. These are founded on the basis of Śaivāgamas, as well as on logic and intuitive experiences of elevated souls or savants.

Though the metaphysics of Kashmir Śaivism and Vīraśaivism is identical, yet we notice that the interpretation offered by competent scholars shows some slight deviation at some crucial points.

Vīraśaivism is called Śivādvaita because it holds that the Ultimate Reality is Śiva, the all-inclusive Universal Being, in whom the entire multiplicity of the objective world has its being potentially and springs up from Him effectively at His will: and because the latent multiplicity even when it becomes patent, or the subtle even

when it grossifies, is not outside Him. It is called 'Sarva Śrutisāramata' because it maintains the consistent and harmonious interpretation of all the apparently conflicting statements found in the Śrutis in the light of dualistic-cum-monistic view. It points out that everything is unity from one point of view but multiplicity from another. The individual is different from Śiva at the empirical level but is one with Him, when he merges into Him at liberation, exactly as a river is different from the ocean when it is flowing on the plain but becomes one with it when it falls into the ocean. The seed is one, but leaves, branches, flowers and fruit which spring from it, are many. Hence it asserts that dualism-cum-monism is the only sound philosophy.

Kashmir Śaivism is called Trika for the simple reason that it deals with the three-fold aspect of reality — Parā, Parāparā, Aparā though what is absolutely real is only one Supreme Śiva. The ultimate being — Paratattva — has two phases Parāpara (subject — object) and Apara (object or manifest) stages. In this School of thought we find a kind of reconciliation of Abheda, Bhedābheda and Bheda aspects of one absolute reality.

Pratyabhijña:

The dominating idea in Kashmir Śaivism is that the individual self is no other than the Lord Paramaśiva himself, with his powers limited. The object of this system is to make the individual self to discover, understand and experience his native state, the all blissful 'Śivattva' or pure consciousness. The conceptions and perceptions which the individual self experiences are not different from his being, because his is an aspect of universal consciousness; consequently we see that all cognition whether subjective or objective is recognition. The individual self by his very nature is capable of becoming omniscient but there are certain hindrances in the way: these hindrances will have to be removed. The doctrine of recognition as adumbrated in this system will help man to solve the problem for the removal of hindrances by right knowledge from scriptures, preceptorial instruction and individual effort and practices.

The main topics of Kashmir Śaivism are God, world, soul, bondage and salvation. The Supreme God is called 'Parasaṁvit' 'Cit' or 'Paramaśiva.' He is 'anuttara' *i.e.*, there is nothing beyond Him. He is beyond time, space and causality. He is unrelated, He is absolute bliss — 'Paripūrnānandaghana.' He is Prakāśa — Vimarśamaya. He can manifest himself in various forms at will. Vimarśa is internal perception. He can see himself and the universe in perfect identity. His principal attributes, powers or qualities are the five Śaktis *viz.*, Cit, Āanada, Icchā, Jñāna and Kriyā (pure consciousness, bliss, will power, power of knowledge and creative power or action force). These will be in a dormant state, calm as the waters of a wave-less ocean (Praśānta Sāgara) in the transcendental stage of Paramaśiva. When the Lord desires to create the world the Śaktis assume the dynamic form. Out of the five Śaktis, three of them *viz.*, Icchā, Jñāna and Kriyā manifest themselves in various forms but with a limited scope in the created world. The entire world is, therefore, the manifestation of Śaktis which are inseparable from the Supreme Lord Paramaśiva. Paramaśiva has two aspects transcendental and immanent. In the transcendental aspect these five Śaktis will be in an unmanifested State. Lord Paramaśiva is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent even in the immanent state.

Lord Paramaśiva created this world out of his free will and on his own accord (līlā). He is the absolute reality both in his transcendental and immanent aspects. So the world which is the manifestation of the Lord himself is absolutely real. The world is not separate from him. Similarly Paramaśiva has manifested himself in two forms — the experiencer and the experienced. The experiencer is Grāhaka, the individual soul, and the experienced is Grāhya, the universe or the objective world. The experiencer or the finite self is no other than the Lord himself with limited powers.

Kashmir Śaivism is generally known as pratyabhijñā system. It has refuted the Buddhist theory of nihilistic doctrine (anityavāda) and the illusory theory of Kevalādvaitins (Māyāvāda), accepted the salient and practical aspects of Śivaśakti doctrine of Śakti cult, adopted

the twenty five tattvas, or categories, of Sāṅkhya system and added eleven more subtle categories (tattvas) while describing the manifestation of the world process. It has shown that the Śabdādvaita or Śabdabrahman of Bhartruhari which stops at Paśyantī, as the last stage of the manifestation of 'Vāk' is not valid and that the one reality in the course of manifestation has appeared in terms of four aspects of speech (Parāvāk) Parā, Paśyantī, Madhyamā and Vaikharī.

Pratyabhijñā is recognition. It is cognition of a thing which is existing but not recognised from the metaphysical point of view. Pratyabhijñā leads a person to become aware of the fact that the individual being is identical with the universal being Paramaśiva. Lord Paramaśiva has adopted the limited form of individual being (Paśubhāva) out of his own free will (Svātantrya Śakti) and consequently the individual being loses awareness of his real nature by 'Māyā Vimohinī Śakti' which is his deluding power and becomes limited in his thought and action. Pratyabhijñā enables him (the limited being) the aspirant, to recognise his own Supreme nature already innate in him by means of contemplation and meditation which enables him to attain recognitive insight (Dṛk Kriyātmaka Śakti) or by manifestation of innate ontological powers. The object of this kind of knowledge is, to remove the veil and to expose what is hidden, thus making self-recognition possible. This can be achieved by right knowledge from scriptures, preceptorial instruction and individual effort and practices (Sāstraḥ, Gurutaḥ, Svataḥ).

Ābhāsavāda (Phenominalism):

The underlying principle of the Universe is pure consciousness. The world of ever changing forms or appearance is the expression of consciousness of the ultimate reality. All that appears, all that forms the object of perception or conception, all that is within the reach of the external senses or the internal mind, all that we are conscious of, all that can be said to exist in anything, be it the subject or object or the means of knowledge itself is Ābhāsa (Shining out).

Iśvara Pratyabhijña:

There is apparently difference between being and becoming. Our perception is confined to the diversities in the objective forms.

The forms appear and disappear but the being *i.e.*, the underlying consciousness is unchanging, everlasting and self-existent.

Vīraśaivism:

The central idea of Vīraśaiva philosophy is that Lord Śiva is indistinguishable from his Śakti, that in the original state Śiva alone existed and all the manifold world of mater and life existed in Him in a subtle form wholly indistinguishable from Him. He separated the living beings who were associated with different kinds of Karma and also manifested the material world in various forms so that the living beings might purge themselves of all impurities by the fulfilment of the Law of Karma and ultimately return to the transcendental by the grace of God and become merged with Him.

Bhedābhedavāda:

The relation between God and the world is one of identity in difference. The ultimate reality is one of unity in multiplicity. Both unity and multiplicity are equally real and eternal because it always exists potentially in the power of the Lord. Śrīpathipaṇḍita is of the opinion that unity and multiplicity are the two states of the same reality — unity in unmanifested state and multiplicity in the evolved state. The difference between Jīva and Śiva or Brahman in so far as the former is the worshipper and possesses limited knowledge and the latter is the object of worship.

Śiva-Śakti:

According to Kashmir Śaivism the sovereignty of Lord's will is responsible for all manifestations. Lord Maheśvara by His inherent Vimarśa Śakti performs creation, preservation and dissolution. He abounds in bliss and consciousness and is all pervasive. He is the unrestrained stream of will and spontaneous flow of cognition and activity.

One of the varied aspects of Śakti is Prāṇaśakti — life energy — the motive and sustaining force. The immanent aspect of Paramaśiva sustains and controls the universe by this dynamic prāṇaśakti. Bereft of this Śakti, life in any sphere means decay. The physical and psychological practicess uch as prāṇāyāma, dhāraṇa and dhyāna are connected with this Prāṇaśakti. Voluntary and involuntary

movements in the physical body are controlled by this prāṇaśakti. This is a psycho-physical force. All activities, subjective and objective, of the individual self are based on this prāṇaśakti. 'Sarvaṁ Prāṇe Pratiṣṭhitā.'

According to Vīraśaivism Śakti of the Lord has manifested itself in two forms. Mahāmāyā or Ūrdhvamāyā and Adhomāyā. It is Mahāmāyā that evolves itself into the phenomenal universe. It does not produce any illusion in the substratum or abode of consciousness. It is the Adhomāyā that hides the true nature of the self and limits the five powers of the Lord in the lower order of creation which consists of 30 principles or tattvas. It may be noted here that the world consists of 36 tattvas or principles according to Śaiva philosophy. The word Māyā used here is not to be mistaken for Mithyā (illusion) as advaitins characterise it. It may be taken as an intermediate agency of the Lord for the creation of the world and plurality of souls.

Śiva remaining unchanged in Himself, appears in two forms — Liṅga (pure consciousness) and Aṅga (individual soul or jīva). As the supreme Lord Śiva is bifurcated as Brahma and Jīva so His Śakti (energy) is also bifurcated into two. Śakti is called Maheśvari. One part of it, may be regarded as associated with Liṅga and the other with Jīva. According to Vīraśaiva philosophy Śakti and Bhakti (devotion) are the two modes of different spheres of activity— Śakti is Pravṛtti; Bhakti is nivṛtti. Śiva's innate power is wholly responsible for the entire creation of the universe and the same power reacting in the individual leading to final liberation is called Bhakti (devotion). In the reverse trend it is liberating. In reality there is no difference between Śakti and Bhakti.

Individual Self:

Kashmir Śaivism postulates 36 categories to explain the process of cosmic evolution thus producing the most complete analysis of nature. The Universe is divided into 36 categories, (Brahmāṇḍa) so also the individual soul (Piṇḍāṇḍa). These are grouped in two ways as pure order and impure order. The pure order is divided into five sub-divisions—Śiva, Śakti, Sadāśiva, Īśvara and Śuddhavidyā.

Out of these five categories the first two will not undergo any dual change though these are the potential source for further division from Māyā down to earth. The categories Sadāśiva, Īśvara and Śuddhavidyā are the subtle stages at which the duality manifests itself on conscious level. The impure order consists of 31 categeries from Māyā down to earth. The duality becomes more explicit in this order. We also see the working of the Māyā in all the states of this impure order. Māyā is the primeval cause of the entire lower order. Māyā obscures the true nature of the Self, limits his power, brings about differentiation and multiplication. Māyā is real in as much as it is the creation of the Supreme Lord, Paramaśiva. Māyā is the most distinctive power of the universal self in its creative aspect. It manifests diversity and is also the force of obscuration. It is beyond the comprehension of our senses. As an aspect of the universal self it is eternal.

The first products of Māyā are the 'Pañca Kañcukas' or the five sheaths of the individual soul. These are nothing other than the limited powers of the five attributes of the Lord *viz.*, consciousness (Cit) bliss (Ānanda) will power (Icchā Śakti) power of knowledge (Jñānaśakti) and creative power (dynamic aspect).

In the pure order the powers (Sarvajñattva, Sarvakartṛttva, Sarvavyāpakattva, Nityattva and Paripūrṇattva) omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence or pervasiveness, eternity and perfectness become reduced to vidyā (limited consciousness) kalā (limited creation) niyati (regulation or restriction) kāla (limited duration) and rāga (limited interest). These limitations are subjective in nature and are collectively called five Kañcukas *i.e.*, sheaths or cloaks of the puruṣa. The individual self who is thus associated with three impurities (Āṇava, Māyā and Karma malas) stated above and five Kañcukas is called Puruṣa.

There is hardly any appreciable difference between the main principles of Śaivādvaita or Pratyabhijñā system of Kashmir and Śakti Viśiṣṭādvaita of Vīraśaivism. There are clear and unmistakable references showing similarity of the main principles of the two systems. The conception of reality, the Śivaśakti doctrine, the manifestation

of the objective world, the 36 categories or principles from Śiva down to earth, the three 'malas' and five Kañcukas' which cover the individual soul and the divine grace or Śivānugraha as a necessary or essential element for Mokṣa, or liberation, are the several points in which the systems agree though they with regard to the means of realisation (Sādhana) differ in several respects.

Bondage:

It is the common belief of all schools of Indian Philosophy that ignorance is the cause of bondage and that knowledge is the only means of liberation. According to Kashmir Śaivism ignorance does not mean total absence of knowledge. It means simply imperfect knowledge.

According to both schools of thought—Kashmir Śaivism and Vīraśaivism—the first primary limiting condition which reduces the universal consciousness to a limited aspect (Aṇu) is Āṇavamala. It is the outcome of Icchā Śakti of the supreme. It is innate ignorance. Next is Māyīyamala — another limiting condition. It is that which brings about consciousness of difference. This is the outcome of the limitation of jñānaśakti. The other impurity which is closely associated with this is Karmamala. This is the result of the performance of worldly duties and its effects. The self is covered with these three impurities *viz.*, Āṇava (innate ignorance), Māyīyamala (transmigratory existence) and of Karma (good and bad deeds). Although these impurities are said to be related to one another by causal relation, yet no idea of succession in their coming into existence, is implied. It is by these malas, or impurities, that the individual is in bondage.

Upāyas:

The embodied soul, though in reality is identical with the principle of universal consciousness, does not appear as such owing to three limitations known as Āṇava, Māyīya and Karma. These defilements circumscribe his powers of desire, knowledge and activity. With the right mode of approach external and internal, perfect bliss, perfect knowledge and perfect authorship can be obtained. In order to achieve liberation or release from the limitations or defilements the seers have prescribed several ways and means according

to the ability of the aspirant (Sādhaka). These are called Upāyas. The aim of all Upāyas is a gradual dispossession of the animal nature, cultivation of higher human values and an eventual at-one-ment with the one divine consciousness that pervades all, that stations itself in the individual, spreads itself in the universe and contains both in its transcendent Being. The aim of these Upāyas is to get rid of the three malas (impurities) that obstruct the light of consciousness *i.e.*, Caitanyam — *i.e.*, the Ātma. The main Upāyas that are indicated in the Śivasūtras discovered and propagated by Vāsugupta are Śāmbhavopāya, Śaktopāya and Āṇavopāya.

Śaktipāta or Śivānugraha (Divine Grace):

One of the distinguishing features of all systems of Śaivism is Śaktipāta. It is called Divine Grace. This redemptive grace is one of the five principal functions of Lord Paramaśiva. Whatever may be the intellectual or spiritual knowledge one may possess, there is no guarantee that he will attain self-realisation unless he is blessed with the Grace of the Lord. Śiva's grace is not the outcome of caprice. It has to be earned by moral and spiritual discipline.

The nature of spiritual evolution or transformation of the individual self may roughly be estimated or explained in this way by the nature of the divine grace that has been showered on the aspirant.

1. Unswerving devotion to Rudra.
2. Power of incantation (Mantra Siddhi).
3. Control over all the elements (Tattva Sākṣātkāra).
4. Capacity to accomplish the desired end (Iṣṭasiddhi).
5. Sudden dawning of the knowledge of all the Śāstras (Jñānāvirbhāva)—'Abhinavagupta.'

Sapta Pramātras:

In the process of the evolution of consciousness Kashmir Śaivites have classified different levels of consciousness in seven stages. Lord Paramaśiva is pure consciousness. In the immanent aspect Paramaśiva has become the individual Self with limited consciousness in seven stages — Śiva, Mantra Maheśvara, Mantreśvara, Mantra, Vijñānakala, Pralayakala and Sakala. Śiva the first Pramātru retains the undivided state of consciousness. When the first movement

or vibration (Spanda) occurs in Śiva, the Śaktis or powers unfold themselves. Śaktitattva the second in order is the source of all creation. From the third category of Sadāśivatattva the differentiation of the experiencer (Grāhaka) and the experienced (Grāhya) begins. Here the experiencer is called Mantra-maheśvara. Next in order comes Mantreśvara in the Īśvaratattva and Mantra in Śuddha Vidyātattva. The three individual selves — Mantra-maheśvara, Mantreśvara and Mantra are omniscient and are free from malas or difilements but they have varying experience of unity consciousness. The differentiation in these three States is on conscious level in respect of differentiation of subject and object.

After Śuddhavidyā-tattva and Māyā-tattva comes in Vijñānakala. He is free from Māyīyamala and Karma mala but has still Āṇavamala. He has Jñāna and Icchā but no Karma. He is omniscient and the whole universe is one object to him.

When the individual soul is wrapped up with Māyā, Kañcukas and Antaḥkaraṇa he is called Praḷayakala. He has no physical body or sensory (Sūkṣmaśarīra) organs. His vision is conditioned or limited by five Kañcukas and Puryastaka — a subtle body consisting of five tanmātras, manas, ahaṅkāra and buddhi.

The individual soul with Puryastaka when associated with physical body and sensory organs is called Sakala. He is associated with the three malas or impurities. The first impurity is Āṇava. It is innate ignorance which is the outcome of the limitation of will power (Icchāśakti). Māyāṅgamala is the limitation of the power of ordinary consciousness. The third kind of impurity is Karmamala. Thus Sakala is associated with the three impurities and also subjected to opposites (*dvandvas*) such as pleasure and pain, birth and death. The lineage of bondage is thus completed. Even in this state of bondage the individual self potentially possesses the all blissful Śiva-hood. By individual effort he will be able to extend his consciousness and eventually achieve final stage of Śivattva.

Ṣaṭ-Sthala:

The philosophy of the Ṣaṭ-Sthala of Vīraśaivas is as follows. Ṣaṭ-Sthala are the six poises of the divine, on the double manifestation,

as Liṅga and Aṅga. Sri M. P. Pandit of Aurobindo Ashram has neatly summarised this philosophy in the following words.

"Paratattva — the supreme reality is conceived as both with form and without form. This ultimate is the Sthala (Stha — 'Source' and La — 'goal') the divine who is at the head of creation is called Śiva. Inherent in Him there is a conscious force — a Vimaśa Śakti, Self-involution and a state of self-expansion. In the former condition the supreme is un-manifest; in the other He is manifest. That is to say the Paraśiva remains formless or formful according to the mood of His Śakti. That is His Līlā — Śiva who is 'Sthala' becomes, in his divine play, two — Liṅga and Aṅga, Śiva and Jīva. Śakti which is inalienable is Kalā as related to Liṅga and Bhakti as related to Aṅga. Bhakti here means a spirit of self-surrender and worship.

The Liṅga (*i.e.* Śiva as Liṅga) Śiva with form (Sakala) is Iṣṭaliṅga, attainable by the soul in the waking state, in the gross form, the tyāgāṅga. The Iṣṭaliṅga further modifies itself into two: the Ācāra Liṅga practical, in which the 'tyāgāṅga' develops faith (bhakti) and becomes *Bhakta-Sthala*, the Guruliṅga and the perspective in which Tyāgāṅga has strong faith and becomes *Maheśa-Sthala*.

Śiva with and without form, sakala and niṣkala, is Prāṇaliṅga attainable by the soul in the dream-state in the subtle form bhōgāṅga. The Prāṇaliṅga also modifies itself into two, the Śivaliṅga—auspicious, in which the bhōgāṅga focusses an exclusive concentration and becomes thereby *Prasādisthala*: the Caraliṅga, the active, with which when the Bhōgāṅga gets identified in experience it becomes the Prāṇaliṅga.

Śiva without form — Niṣkala is Bhāvaliṅga attainable by the soul in the state of deep sleep in the causal form Yōgāṅga. The Bhāvaliṅga too modifies itself into two: the Prasādaliṅga, the gracious, by meditation on which the Yōgāṅga gets established in a joyous '*śaraṇsthala*' and the 'Mahāliṅga', the great by identification with which the yōgāṅga attains a state of identity, '*aikyasthala*.'

Thus the divine reality admits of both the states of form and no form. The evolution of the universe proceeds by a manifestation of 36 tattvas or principles Śiva, Śakti, Sadāśiva, Īśvara, Sadvidyā,

Māyā, five Kañcukas (of kalā, niyati, rāga, vidyā, kāla), puruṣa prakṛti, mahat, ahaṅkāra, five tanmātras, manas, five organs of perception, five of action and the five elements. When His Śakti blossoms Śiva manifests in in these 36 all pervading tattvas. He extends Himself into all this — yet all the while never ceasing to be what he has been always and ever will be in his utter existence. In a word this creation is a self formulation of the Reality that is divine. At every grade of the manifestation there is, in principle, an identity between the creator and the created, the Liṅga and the Aṅga and it is the object of this discipline to realise their union at each stage so as to achieve a complete harmony in oneness between Śiva and Jīva." The manifestation of 36 tattvas may be grouped under three categories of cit, cit acit and acit 5, 6 and 25 respectively or into 11 Liṅga tattvas and 25 Aṅga tattvas.

Aṣṭāvaraṇa:

There are eight aids for the attainment of Spirituality and final union with the Lord. These aids are — Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Vibhūti, Rudrākṣi, Pādōdaka, Prasāda and Mantra. Guru is the preceptor who initiates the devotee into the knowledge of Śiva and guides him in the practice of worship and devotion after performing the Dīkṣā ceremony. Liṅga is Śiva. Jaṅgama is the perfected soul. The aspirant for release should surrender all, to these three and worship them to obtain divine grace and identify himself with them. These are the three aspects of the divinity. When Guru and Jaṅgama of the above discription are not available for worship the devotee will worship the Liṅga invoking Guru and Jaṅgama aspects in the Liṅga itself.

ekamūrtistrayorbhāgaḥ Guruliṅgantujaṅgamaṁ

Liṅga in this one form comprises three parts Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama.

The devotee has to observe eight rules to obtain spiritual advancement. (1) Obedience to Guru (2) Daily worship of Liṅga (3) Reverence to Jaṅgama (4) Smearing of the Sacred ash (bhasma) on the forehead and on the several portions of the body (5) wearing of rosary beads (Rudrākṣa) (6) Sipping of the water in which the

feet of the Guru or Jaṅgama are worshipped and washed or the water poured on the Liṅga (7) Prasāda is the offering of food to Liṅga or Guru or Jaṅgama and partaking sacramentally of what is left over in the cooking vessel or food or fruits touched and blessed by Guru or Jaṅgama (8) Mantra is uttering the six syllabled formula — letter picture of the concept of Śiva and the sound body of the deity — repeated as 'Oṁ namaśśivāya' in the contemplation of God. This is the daily observance of a Vīraśaiva.

Sādhana:

Often religious practices meant for spiritual elevation such as concentration and meditation on transcendental reality is common for all sādhanas but worship of Liṅga with some approved religious formalities is a special feature in Vīraśaiva religion. Ṣaṭ-sthala principle' is conscious appreciation of the six divisions of the transcendental reality with immanent aspect of this universe. This conceptual affirmation with constant reflection enables the aspirant to have evolutionary progression in his worldly life with all its vicissitudes. The Guru or the preceptor initiates and directs the deserving disciple for a change over of his mental faculties from objective to subjective universe. In order to arrest the disability in the mental faculties which are generally shaky, unstable and deteriorative the symbolic Liṅga is given to him with instruction to be conscious of the divinity in all his movements and activities. His conscious efforts towards progress in these spiritual practices unveils the coverings of malas, or impurities, from the self in several stages. It is ordained that the worship of Liṅga in spiritual, ritualistic performance should be constant until self-luminosity is attained.

Śivayōga:

Śivayōga is the yogic process of attaining at-one-ment with Śiva, the Supreme reality. Internal or mental worship of the Lord by contemplation is the real worship but it grows and develops out of external worship performed by physical acts. That is why "Śivayōga Pradīpikā" says: 'One enjoys worship by physical acts (Kriyāmārga) which proceeds developing into internal worship.'

The worship and meditation of Śiva necessitates the wearing of

Liṅga, the symbol of Śiva, on the body. An aspirant has to undergo the Dīkṣā ceremony for wearing the Liṅga on the body. This important ceremony is intended to provide the aspirant with an instrument to remove the bonds that imprison the soul in the body. The Guru imparts the full knowledge and the central truth of the path. He communicates to him something of his own power of consciousness. This is the Sādhana Śakti that is alive with the tapas of the Guru and once it enters the being of the disciple it commences his Sādhana, takes charge and leads him onward. The disciple is required to have faith, devotion, discrimination, gratitude and zeal to obtain Dīkṣā. Dīkṣā the initiation ceremony for consecration is of three kinds Vedhā, Mantra and Kriyā. These three kinds go with Bhāvaliṅga, Prāṇaliṅga and Iṣṭaliṅga respectively. Dīkṣā is a means of psychic discipline and culture *i.e.*, a means of destroying the three impurities Āṇava, Māyīya and Karma malas.

The characteristics of the three Liṅgas above named have been clearly elucidated by Nijaguṇa Śivayōgi as follows:

Iṣṭaliṅga:

The Iṣṭaliṅga is '*bodhamantra*' *i. e.*, identified with pure consciousness. The Liṅga is the support of itself, (tanage tānādhāravāgirpa). Liṅga is 'Substance' which means that it does not depend upon anything else for its existence and that it can be conceived by itself by its Vimarśaśakti.

Prāṇaliṅga:

Prāṇaliṅga is a mystical Liṅga. It is to be identified with Supreme nāda or *anāhatanāda* It pervades all the different *cakras* and is pervasive of the whole body. It shines through the pores of the body. It is luminous. It has harmony inside.

Bhāvaliṅga:

Bhāvaliṅga is *mūlakāraṇa*, the original cause, *i.e.*, the cause, the effect and the process — 'kāraṇa' 'kārya', and 'karma' are merely the manifestations of this Parama Kāraṇa. This is the nature of causality. It is the all spectator or witness of all existence. It is pure bliss without parallel. It is causa sui. It is the spectator and finally it is beatification.

The five elements of Śivayoga, the Yogic process, are Śivajñāna (knowledge of Śiva), Śivabhakti (devotion to Śiva), Śivadhyāna (contemplation of Śiva) of Śivavrata (performance of Śaiva rites meant for spiritual salvation) and Śivārcana (worship of Śiva). The last is the essential portion in which the other four are contained. In the performance of Śivapūja mantrayoga, layayoga, bhaktiyoga, karmayoga and jñānayoga are involved.

Liberation:

The individual soul in bondage is called "Paśu." He has three beginningless impurities—Āṇava, Māyīya and Karma. Liberation consists in everlasting freedom from these three bondages and subsequent union with Śiva through His grace. The way to liberation is exactly the reverse of the way of manifestation. The knowledge which liberates is not mere intellectual awareness but it is a spiritual intuition of the fundamental unity. This can be accomplished when God is worshipped in two-fold forms, the physical and the spiritual. This necessitates the worship of Liṅga the emblem of God. The path of devotion leads the devotee to the attainment of similarity in respect of the attributes with the object of devotion. The soul that attains the final union with Paramaśiva is characterised by total absence of consciousness of all objectivity. It is nothing but consciousness of Brahman, Śrīpati Paṇḍita points out that through the performance of religious duties and surrendering the fruits thereof to God the mind becomes purified and that by devotion to God one will receive grace which alone is capable of bringing about Salvation.

As regards evolution of consciousness through his Sādhana, Vīraśaivism asserts the realisation of Ṣaṭ-sthala whereas Kashmir Śaivism holds recognition of transcendental reality as the final goal of the individual.

Liṅgāṅga Sāmarasya:

The unity of liṅga and aṅga is the identity of Śiva and Jīva. This is technically called *Liṅgāṅga Sāmarasya*.. The unity of the finite self (Aṅga) and the universal self (Liṅga) can be achieved by following the path of devotion. Devotion manifests itself in diverse

graded forms *viz.*, Śraddhā, Naiṣṭhika, Avadhāna, Anubhāva, Ānanda and Samarasa. Śraddhā bhakti is the main motive force of the spiritual discipline. It progresses from simple sincere faith to the place of Naiṣṭhika, or confirmed feeling of devotion to the Lord. The next higher step is Avadhāna bhakti which is self awareness in that state of devotion. These three are in the first division of Ṣaṭsthala scheme of devotion. In the next division Bhakti or devotion develops the power of partially experiencing divine life and is therefore called Anubhāva, initial state of experience of the divine. Further it grows into Ānanda bhakti in which there is real joy of divine life. Ultimately it rises to the full and lasting experience of divine life of being one with the divinity. This is Samarasa bhakti. The followers of these graded six kinds of Bhakti are called respectively bhakta, maheśa, prasādi, prāṇaliṅgi, śaraṇa and aikya.

Conclusion:

Kashmir Śaivism embraces the salient features of the philosophies of India. We find here the psychological practices of yoga, ākhyāti of Mīmāmsakas *i.e.*, voluntary limitation of one's own powers, monism of the Upaniads, pragmatism and realism of nyāya Vaśeṣika and twenty five categories of Sāṅkhya. We find the implications of qualified monism admitting the attributes of the supreme being. Finally admitting absolute reality in the subjective and objective creation of this endless universe, it reconciles the opposition between being and becoming and the one and the many. The aspirant who wants to acquire and assimilate perfect knowledge and wisdom, has vast choice in this system in selecting and electing practices according to his own temperament and abilities. Further there is vast scope for self-analysis and for differentiating his experiences and for verifying his states and stages of consciousness by comparing scriptural knowledge with his inner experience.

Vīraśaivism is a synthesis of the realistic, voluntaristic and mystic tendencies. Śakti-viśiṣṭādvaita of Vīraśaivism is based on the main principles of Ātma vimarśa of Kashmir Śaivism but modified in several ways with distinct characteristics arising from the particular environment and age and with orientation suited to the

purpose and temperament of the people. The distinct characteristic features are Ṣaṭ-sthala, Aṣṭāvaraṇa and Śivayōga. In the 12th century a religious movement came into being. Anubhava maṇṭapa —an academy of Śivaśaraṇas (mystic saints) was started by Śri Basavēśvara. This organisation consisting of a galaxy of eminent religious personalities brought about several reforms in society and in religion. Superstitions were condemned. Social equality was upheld. Women were given equal status with men in matters of worship. New values of life were infused into the life of the people. The then existing system of Vīraśaivism was revitalised by adopting the salient features of the other systems of Śaivism and evolving a new code of conduct and method of spiritual practice. In short the Śivaśaraṇas demonstrated that religion is a way of life and that purification is essential for religious life.

J. RUDRAPPA

They demur not from buying
The hare hawked by hunter.

But none'll scarce consider
tho' monarch, his body deceased!

So is human life regarded!
as meaner than the hare's!

Hence hold fast to faith
in Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.§

VĪRAŚAIVISM AND ŚAIVA-SIDDHĀNTA

Śaivism is one of the most ancient religions of India. It is hardly possible to trace the origin and the exact date of Śaivism. The excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro throw light on the civilisation of the Indus valley which was a highly evolved one. On the basis of the remnants secured at the excavations, it can be concluded that Śaivism was also a religion of those people. Śaivism existed in India even prior to the migration of Āryans. Macnicol observed, 'Śiva is in the main not Āryan but aboriginal.'[1] "The hold of Śaivism extends not only over the whole of India from the Indus valley to Bengal, but stretches out across the sea to farther India and the Archipelago and beyond the mountains of central Asia."[2] Thus K. A. Nilakantha Shastri rightly mentions the spread of Śaivism both in India and abroad.

Even in the Ṛgveda,[3] Yajurveda[4] and Atharvaveda[5] there are references to Śiva. Śvetāśvatara[6] and some other upaniṣads expound the supremacy of Śiva. Megasthenes[7] refers to the worship

1 'Indian Theism'. p. 161. By Macnicol. Oxford University Press, 1915.

2 'The Cultural Heritage of India' Vol. II. p. 16. pub. by Ramakrishna Centenary Committee, Calcutta.

3 Ṛgveda I. 8.8; I. 16.9; II. 33; X. 92.9; X. 136.

4 Yajurveda. Taittirīya Saṁhitā. IV. 5.1; VI. 2.3. Yajurveda. Vājasaneyi saṁhitā. XVI, XXXIX.

5 Atharvaveda. IV. 28.1; VI. 1.9; XI. 2.10; XIII. 4.28; XV. 5.1.

6 Śvetāśvatara upaniṣad I. 20.

7 Hinduism and Buddhism. II, pp. 137-8. By Elliot.

of Śiva. Patañjali refers to Śivabhāgavatas, ascetics moving from place to place. Patañjali mentions images of Śiva and Skanda made of precious metals and apparently used in domestic worship. In Mahābhārata there is an abundant number of references praising the supremacy of Śiva terming him as Īśvara, Maheśvara and Viśveśvara etc.[8] Mahābhārata even describes the seers who are besmeared with ashes wearing rudrākṣi. Thus Śaivism was one of the earliest and most celebrated religions which has exerted a unique influence in moulding the way of life of the people in the past and which is still today a living religion being embraced by a good number of people in India.

Śaivism gave rise to many schools of philosophy which have developed later, *viz.*, Vīraśaivism of Karnāṭak, Śaiva-siddhānta of Tamiḷnāḍ, Śivādvaita (Trika system) of Kashmir, Pāśupata of Gujarat and Śaivism of Bengal.

In this article, an attempt is made to compare the principal tenets of Vīraśaivism (Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita Siddhānta) and Śaiva-siddhānta.

Sources for Vīraśaivism and Śaiva Siddhānta:

Śaivāgamas have been regarded as the most authoritative texts for all schools of Śaivism. The schools which are based on Śaivāgamas are not different but they indicate various attempts to realise the ultimate Reality *viz.*, Śiva. The twenty-eight[9] Śaivāgamas and upāgamas;[10] the sayings of the mystics like Allamaprabhu, Canna-basavaṇṇa, Basavaṇṇa, Siddharāma and others and works of Śivāgrayogi Śivācārya, Nīlakaṇṭha Śivācārya, Maggeya Māyidēva,

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8 Mahābhārata. VIII. 436; X. 252; XII. 4498.

9 Kāmika, Yogaja, Cintya, Kāraṇa, Ajita, Dīpta, Sūkṣma, Sahasra, Aṁśumān, Suprabhēda, Vijaya, Niśvāsa, Svāyaṁbhuva, Anala, Vīra, Raurava, Makuṭa, Vimala, Candrajñāna, Biṁba, Prōdgīta, Lalita, Siddha, Santāna, Sarvōttara, Pāramēśvara, Kiraṇa and Vātula.

10 There are more than two-hundred and five upāgamas and references are very often made in Vīraśaiva philosophical works to upāgamas like Śivadharmōttara, Vijayabhairavī, Vātulōttara, and Niśvāsakārikā etc.

Maritōṇṭadārya and others have been accepted as very valuable and authoritative sources for Vīraśaivism.

The sources for Śaiva-siddhānta are the twenty-eight Āgamas and upāgamas,[11] the Nānmarais (the four scriptures), Meykaṇḍa Śāstras (fourteen), the devotional sayings of Tamiḷ mystics termed as "Tirumurai" (twelve).

The Ultimate Reality:

The Ultimate Reality is termed as Liṅga[12] in Vīraśaivism and Pati[13] in Śaiva-siddhānta.

Liṅga is derived from the two roots, Lī and Gaṁ. Gaṁ, to go, to issue forth, so to say, from which creation starts *i.e.*, which is the cause of creation; Lī, to absorb, so to say in which all things merge finally.[14] In other words it is the source and cause of evolution as well as involution. The ultimate Reality is also termed as Bayalu, Sthala, Śūnya and Niṣkalaliṅga in Vīraśaivism. It is termed Bayalu[15] because it is only to be felt and experienced. Words fail to describe Him and they become mute. It is like the "Nēti, Nēti"[16] the utterance of the upaniṣadic seer to describe the Parabrahman as ineffable.

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11 Among the upāgamas Mṛgēndrāgama and Pauṣkarāgama are very often referred to in Tamiḷ works to expound Śaivasiddhānta.

12 liṅgaveṁbudu sarvakāraṇa nirmala
liṅgaveṁbudu saccidānanda nityaparipūrṇa
liṅgaveṁbudu sarvalōkōtpattige kāraṇa
liṅgaveṁbudu sarvatattvapūrṇa caitanya
liṅgaveṁbudu janmavāridhiya dāṇṭisuva bhaitravu
liṅgaveṁbudu śaraṇara hṛdayadalli beḷaguva jyōtirmaya liṅgavu
intī liṅgada marmavanaridavane aridavanu Nijaguru
Svatantra Siddhaliṅgeśvarā.

13 layabhōgādhikārātmā vyāpāratrayalakṣitaḥ
svabhāvādacyuthaḥ śakthaḥ padārthaḥ patisaṁjñitaḥ
Pauṣkarāgama. Manuscript No. R. 13663. Govt. Oriental Library, Madras.

14 Līyate gamyate yatra yena sarvaṁ carācaraṁ
tadetalliṅgamityuktaṁ liṅgatattvaviśāradaiḥ
Śivānubhavasūtra Ch. III. st. 3. pub. by Murughamath, Dharwar, 1958.

15 enendenalilla, nuḍidu hēḷalikkilla, nijadallirdaberagu kuruha arivude? adu tannalli tānilla. enendenalillada *bayalu* alli ēnanū arasalilla. idirilla. tānilla. Cikkayyapriya Siddhaliṅga illa, illa." Vacanaśāstrasāra, Part I. Pūrvārdha, p. 7. v. 1. Ed. by Dr. P. G. Haḷakaṭṭi, Bijapur, 1931.

16 Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad. III. 9. 26.

Sthala metaphysically, is the Absolute,[17] the source of all evolution and phenomenal existence, into which all things are finally absorbed.[18] Psychologically it is a stage; hence sthala also represents the pilgrim's progress in spiritual pursuit. Śūnya[19] is the Absolute, the Infinite. It is beyond all positive and negative attributes. Hence it is termed as Śūnya. The Śūnya as expounded by the Vīraśaiva mystics is not 'emptiness' but is equivalent to the upaniṣadic Parabrahman.[20]

Pati is derived from the root pā, protector, master, Lord. Candrajñānāgama[21] describes the supreme Lord as Pati, because all the beings including gods are subjected to the world-process, but He is the lord of all and hence is termed 'Pati.' The Absolute is also termed as Śiva and Hara; Śiva[22] because He is pure and supreme bliss. Mātaṅga Pārameśvarāgama[23] described God as Hara, because He removes the bonds of the souls and redeems them from the cycle of birth and death.

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17 ekameva paraṁ brahma saccidānandalakṣaṇaṁ
śivatattvaṁ śivācāryāḥ sthalamityāhurādarāt
Kaivalyasāra, p. 3. st. 13. pub. by R. B. Mallappa Vārada, Sholapur, 1907.

18 yatrādau sthīyate viśvaṁ prākṛtaṁ pauruṣaṁ yataḥ
līyate punarante ca sthalaṁ tatprocyate tataḥ
Śivānubhavasūtra Ch. II. st. 4.

19 ayyā, niravaya śūnyaliṅga mūrtiya nilukaḍe entendoḍe, sākāranalla nirākāranalla nōḍā. niravaya sūnyaliṅga mūrti ādiyalla, anādiyalla, ihadavanalla, paradavanalla, sukhadavanalla, duḥkhadavanalla. niravaya śūnyaliṅga mūrti puṇyapāpadavanalla. kartṛ bhṛtyanalla, kāraṇa kāryanalla, dharmikarmiyalla, pūjyapūjakanalla. intu ubhayavaḷidu beḷaguva nōḍā namma Guheśvaraliṅgavu. Vacanaśāstrasāra Part I. Pūrvārdha. 2nd Edn. Ed. by Dr. P. G. Haḷakaṭṭi, Bijapur, 1931.

20 Ref. Śūnyasaṁpādane Vol. I. Preface. p. viii. pub. by Karnatak University Dharwar, 1965.

21 brahmādyā sthāvarāntāśca devadevasya śūlinaḥ
paśavaḥ parikīrtyante saṁsāravaśavartinaḥ
teṣāṁ patitvādviśveśaḥ śivaḥ paśupatismṛtaḥ
Candrajñānāgama. Kriyāpāda, Paṭala I. st. 10—11.a
Ed. by Kashinath Shastri, Mysore, 1942.

22 Śuddhattavācchivamuddiṣṭam.
Vātulaśuddhākya. I. 20.

23 haraṇaṁ hāniruddiṣṭā bhogesvabhiratātmanāṁ
pudgalānāṁ sanairgatvā liṅgaṁ saṁhṛtya vegataḥ
Mātaṅga Pārameśvarāgama. Vidyāpāda-pati Paṭala, st. 33.

Śiva carries on the five-fold function of creation, preservation, destruction, obscuration and the bestowal of grace.[24]

The following are some of the characteristics relating to God, which are common to both the systems.

God (Liṅga, pati) is immanent and transcendent.[25] He is eternal, omniscient, supreme bliss, and perfect.[26] He is smaller than the smallest[27] and bigger than the biggest.[28] He is the home of all auspicious attributes. God pervades all things, but he is not visible[29] and He is untouched and unaffected by the effects of the whole cosmos.[30]

The Creation of the World:

Śaiva-siddhānta accepts the three categories *viz.*, Pati (God), Paśu (Soul) and Pāśa (bond or fetters). All the three categories are real.

The motive for creation is the redemption of the innumerable number of fettered beings. Hence the ever kind God created the world to liberate the fettered souls through his grace.

God created the world out of Māyā through his Śakti. It has been made clear by the analogy of a potter making a pot. Similarly,

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24 Mṛgendrāgama. Vidyāpāda. Paramokṣanirāsaprakaraṇa. st. 3.

25 vyāpyakṛtsnāṁ sthito lokānanantādiśivāntakān
ekāntāvasthito hyeṣaḥ śivaśaktisamanvitaḥ
Niśvāsakārikā (Mss. p. 542) Pondicherry.

26 astikaścitsvataḥ siddhaḥ saccidānandalakṣaṇaḥ
nityoniranjanaśuddho nirmalo nirupaplavaḥ
Sūkṣmāgama.

27 aṇuviṅge aṇu, mahattiṅge mahattu
Vacanadharmasāra. p. 24. v. 27.

28 śuddhatvācchivamuddiṣṭaṁ parādūrdhvaṁ parātparaṁ
vyomātītaṁ ca sūkṣamaṁ hi nityaṁ kāraṇakāraṇaṁ
Vātulāgama (Mss.) Govt. Oriental Library, Madras.

29 Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu. Bhaktasthala v. 1. Ed. by Prof. S.S. Basawanal.

30 jaladoḷagaṇa sūryanantirpanayyā śivanu, lokādi lokaṅgaḷoḷagirdarēnu jagada puṇyapāpa, svarga naraka, bandhadoṣakoḷagādātane alla......namma Urilinga-peddi priya Viśveśvaranu viśvadoḷage hoddiyū hoddadiraballa, viśvādhipati-yāgalū balla.
Vacanaśāstrasāra. pt. I. pūrvārdha. p. 23. Ed. by Dr. P. G. Haḷakaṭṭi. 2nd Edn. Bijapur. 1931.

the Lord like the potter, creates the world from māyā as the material cause, with the aid of His Śakti as the instrumental cause.[31] The analogy is only to understand the process of creation. Thus Śaiva-siddhānta has regarded Śiva as the efficient cause, Śiva's Śakti as the instrumental cause and māyā as the material cause of this world.

Māyā at the beginning of creation is known as Śuddha māyā and Śiva acts on it through his Śakti and creates, Nāda, Biṅdu, Sādākhya, Māheśvari and Śuddhavidyā. These are termed as Śivatattvas.

Māyā in its subtle state is termed as Aśuddhamāyā, as it is impure, Śiva does not act on it. God Sadāśiva produces from Aśuddha māyā, kāla, niyati and kalā; and from this last product (Kalā), he produces vidyā and rāga.[32] These are termed as pañca-kañcukas (the five sheaths or envelopes). As conditioned by these sheaths, the soul becomes what is called Puruṣatattva. These are termed as Vidyātattvas.

Māyā in its gross state is termed as prakṛti māyā and God Rudra operates on it. From prakṛti in its (avyakta) unmanifest state arise Citta and Buddhi. From Buddhi arises ahaṁkāra. The same being predominated by the three guṇas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) respectively will be termed Taijasa, Vaikṛta and Bhūtādi. From the Taijasa ahaṁkāra will emanate organs of sense (jñānendriyas) and mind; from Vaikṛta ahaṁkāra the organs of action (Karmendriyas) and from the Bhūtādi ahaṁkāra the subtle elements (tanmātras) and the gross elements (mahābhūtas).†

This is the process of the evolution of the world and involution starts from the last. These thirty-six tattvas will resolve in their respective causes at the time of annihilation.

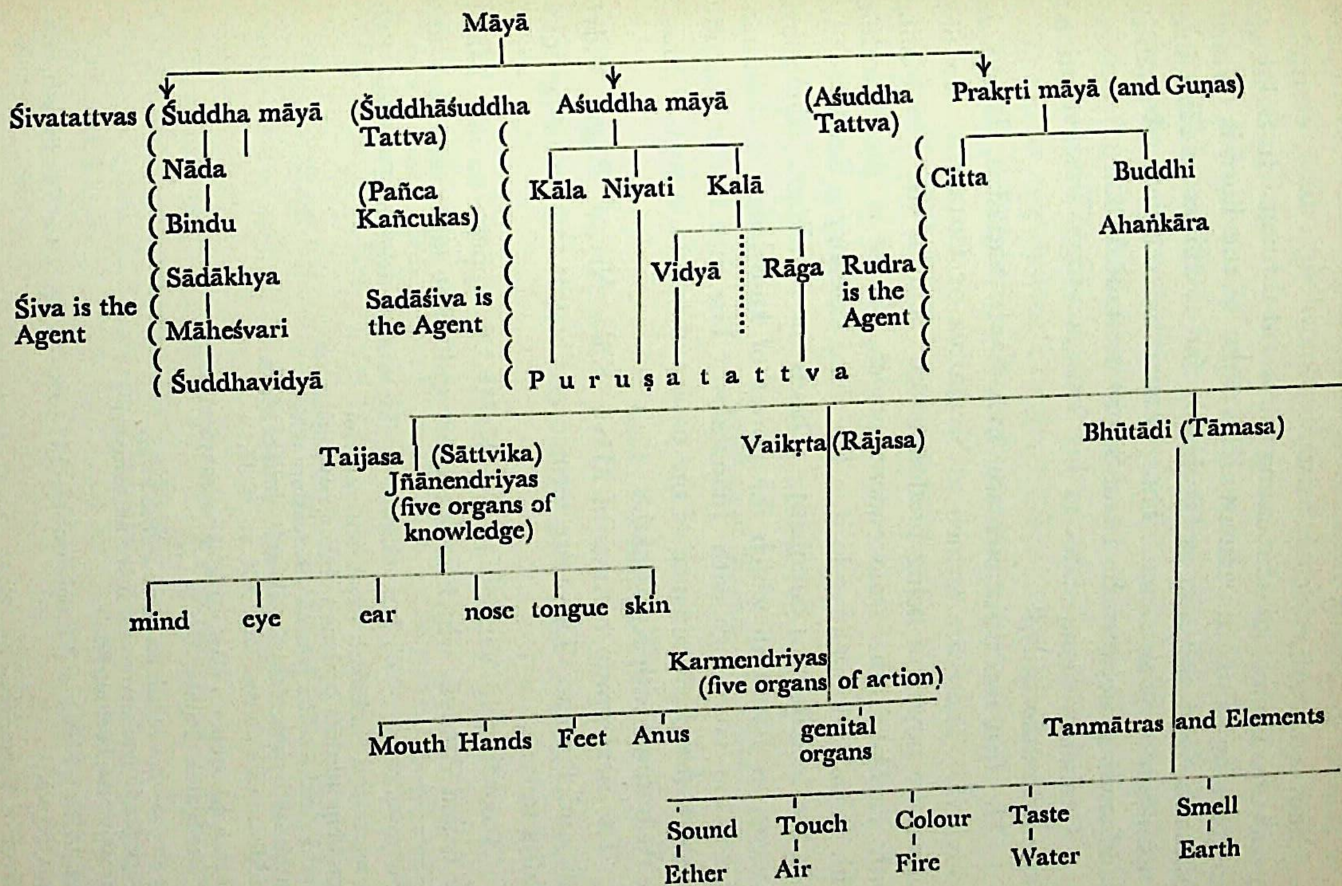
The evolution of the world according to Vīraśaivism is described with slight variation by different Vīraśaiva mystics.

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31 Śivajñāna Siddhiyar. Book. III. Adhikaraṇa. I. st. 18.

32 Śaiva-siddhānta. p. 68. by V. Paranjoti. Second Edn, Luzac & Co. London. 1954.

† See the chart on the next page.


Māyā
Śivatattvas
Śuddha māyā
Nāda
Bindu
Sādākhya
Māheśvari
Śuddhavidyā
Śiva is the Agent
(Śuddhāśuddha Tattva)
(Pañca Kañcukas)
Sadāśiva is the Agent
Aśuddha māyā
Kāla
Niyati
Kalā
Vidyā
Rāga
Rudra is the Agent
Puruṣatattva
(Aśuddha Tattva)
Prakṛti māyā (and Guṇas)
Citta
Buddhi
Ahaṅkāra
Taijasa (Sāttvika)
Jñānendriyas (five organs of knowledge)
mind
eye
ear
nose
tongue
skin
Vaikṛta (Rājasa)
Karmendriyas (five organs of action)
Mouth
Hands
Feet
Anus
genital organs
Bhūtādi (Tāmasa)
Tanmātras and Elements
Sound
Ether
Touch
Air
Colour
Fire
Taste
Water
Smell
Earth

†

In the beginning there was Niṣkala-liṅga, which is impartite, without a second, which is existence, knowledge, bliss, eternal and perfect.[33] He thought of creating the world through His Śakti which inseparably exists with Him.[34] This Śakti of the Lord is termed as Vimarśa Śakti and also as Cicchakti, and it abides in Him just as moon-light in the moon. Thus inseparable relation (Avinābhāva saṁbandha)[35] between Śiva and Śakti[36] is established.

Cannabasavaṇṇa states in his 'karaṇahasuge' the evolution of the world differently.[37]

The first five principles are Śiva, Śakti, Sadāśiva, Īśvara and Sadvidyā. These are termed as Śivatattva or Cittattva. In Śiva-tattva the power of being predominates. This is the Prasādaliṅga with Parāśakti, the transcendent power. Śakti is the Caraliṅga with Ādiśakti dominating in it. The third category is Sadāśiva and in it the Icchāśakti is dominant. This is the Śivaliṅga. The fourth category is Īśvara in which the power of knowledge is dominant. This is the Guruliṅga with Jñānaśakti. The fifth is the Sadvidyā in which the predominance of the power of action is seen. This is the Ācāraliṅga with Kriyāśakti.[38]

The next group consists of Māyā, Kāla, Niyati, Rāga, Vidyā, Kalā and Puruṣa. These are termed as Cidacit tattvas or Śuddhā-śuddha tattvas.

'According to Vīraśaivas, the Kalāśakti appers to be Māyā, also called Avidyā, which is the great gulf that separates Śiva and

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33 Śūnyasaṁpādane. Vol. I. p. 48. pub. by Karnatak University, Dharwar, 1965.

34 vimarśākhyā parāśaktiḥ viśvavaicitryakāriṇī
yasminpratiṣṭhitā brahma tadidaṁ viśvabhājanaṁ
yathā candre sthirā jyotsnā viśvavastuprakāśinī
tathā śaktirvimarśākhyā prakāśe brahmaṇi sthirā
Siddhānta śikhāmaṇi. Ch. XX. st. 35-37.

35 liṅgaṁ śaivamidaṁ sākṣāt śivaśaktyubhayātmakaṁ
Sūkṣmāgama. Paṭala. VI. st. 7.

36 na śivena vinā śaktiḥ na śaktirahitaḥ śivaḥ
puṣpagandhavadanyonyaṁ mārutāṁbarayoriva
Vīraśaivānanda candrikā.

37 Ref. 'A Hand Book of Vīraśaivism' pp. 137-138. by Dr. S. C. Nandimath, M.A., Ph.D. (LOND.)

38 Mirror of Vīraśaivism pp. 86-87. by H. H. Kumaraswamiji, Dharwar.

Jīva.[39] Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi[40] emphasises the same view. (Nityatva) eternity, (Vyāpakattva) all pervasiveness, (Pūrṇattva) perfection, (Sarvajñattva) omniscience and (Sarvakartṛttva) creativeness of the Lord are delimited and become respectively Kāla, Niyati, Rāga, Aśuddhavidyā and Kalā. Thus Śiva being limited becomes Puruṣa.

Cennabasavaṇṇa states entirely a different process of evolution from the Puruṣatattva downwards in his 'karaṇahasuge'[41] which agrees with the Taittirīyopaniṣad.[42]

The next twenty-four categories from Prakṛti to the earth are shown below. They are termed as Aśuddha or Acit tattvas.

Niṣkala-Śiva (Sarvaśūnya-nirālaṁba)
|
Mahāliṅga
|
Śiva — Śakti (Vimarśa)

Śakti (Vimarśa)
|
Sādākhya or Sadāśiva
|
Īśvara
|
Sadvidyā or Śuddhavidyā

} Śuddha or Cit tattvas

Māyā, Kāla, Niyati, Kalā, Vidyā, Rāga and Puruṣa } Śuddhāśuddha or Cidacit tattvas.

Prakṛti, Intellect, Ego, Mind, Eye, Ear, Nose, Tongue, Skin, Mouth, Hands, Feet, Anus, Genital organs, Sound, Touch, Colour, Taste, Smell, Ether, Air, Fire, Water, Earth } Aśuddha or Acit tattvas.

As described before Śaiva-siddhānta accepts three causes for the creation of the world, namely, God, the efficient cause, His Śakti,

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39 A Hand Book of Vīraśaivism, p. 127. by Dr. S.C. Nandimath, M.A.,Ph.D.(LOND).

40 Anādyavidyāsaṁbandhāttadaṁśo jīvanāmakāḥ
Devatiryaṅgmanuṣyādi jātibhede vyavasthitāḥ
Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, Ch. V. st. 35. Ed. by Karibasava Shastri.

41 Cannabasavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu, pp. 669-676. Ed. by Dr. R. C. Hiremath, Dharwar, 1965.

42 Taittirīyopaniṣad. Valli. II. st. 1.

the instrumental cause and Māyā, the material cause; but Vīraśaivism accepts only two causes material and instrumental. Śiva creates the world through His Cicchakti (Vimarśa śakti).[43] In this way Śiva is both the instrumental and material cause.[44] The same idea is also expressed in Muṇḍaka upaniṣad.[45] Just as a spider weaves out of itself a whole web, so God creates out of Himself the whole world. Just as waves and ornaments are not different from the ocean and gold though they possess a different form; in the same way though the world appears to be different, it is not different from God Śiva. So to say the world is the transformation of Śiva's Śakti itself.[46] Thus the world is not an illusion, but it is a reality.

Dr. Dasgupta rightly states,[47] "God Himself by His own will, knowledge and omnipotence transforms Himself into the world. There is no inconsistency in God's transforming Himself into the world, though He is partless; for He can do so by various kinds of powers modifying them according to His own will. He possesses two powers, by one, He has become the world of enjoyables and by the other, the individual souls, the enjoyer, but in spite of this modification of Himself, He remains untouched in His own purity." Vīraśaivism accepts Avikṛtapariṇāma with regard to the evolution of the world. Whereas Śaiva-siddhānta accepts Prakṛti pariṇāma, other philosophers like Sāṇkhyas, Vaiśeṣikas, Advaitins, Viśiṣṭādvaitins have accepted Satkāryavāda, Ārambhavāda, Vivartavāda and Pariṇāmavāda respectively.

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43 vimarśākhyā parāśaktiḥ viśvavaicitryakāriṇī
yasminpratisṭḥitā brahma tadidaṁ visvabhājanaṁ
antaḥkaraṇarūpeṇa jagadaṅkurarūpataḥ
yasminvibhāti cicchaktirbrahmabhūtasya ucyate
Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, Ch. XX. st. 35-36.

44 tasmād abhinnanimittopādāna kāraṇatvaṁ na tu eka kāraṇatvaṁ
Śrīkarabhāṣya, p. 30.

45 yathorṇanābhiḥ sṛjate gṛṇhate ca.
Muṇḍakopaniṣad. 1.1.7.

46 ātmaśakti vikāsena śivo viśvātmanā sthitaḥ
kuṭībhāvā dyathā bhāti paṭasvasya prasāraṇāt
tasmācchivamayaṁ sarvaṁ jagadetaccarācaraṁ
Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, Ch. X. st. 68-69.

47 History of Indian Philosophy. Vol. III. p. 5. Dr. S. N. Dasgupta.

Souls:

According to Śaiva-siddhānta souls are eternal entities and are different from God. Souls are by nature infinite, pervasive and omniscient, but owing to their association with impurities (malatraya), they experience themselves as finite, limited and parviscient. Śivajñāna Siddhiyar describes the real nature of the soul as "It (soul) is formless (Arūpa) and all pervasive (vibhu) but unlike that of Acit or matter. Its vyāpaka consists in becoming one with the thing it dwells in for the time being (body or God). Its eternal intelligence and power is eternally concealed by the Pāśa—(bondage)—Āṇavamala and hence called Paśu."[48] The three malas namely Āṇava, Karma and Māyā bind the soul. The mala-fettered soul is termed as Paśu.[49] The souls are classified into three groups *viz.*, sakalakala, praḷayakala and vijñānakala.[50]

The sakalakala soul is associated with all the three fetters (Āṇava, Karma and Māyā) whereas the praḷayakala soul is with two fetters (Āṇava and Karma) and the vijñānakala soul is with one fetter only (Āṇava mala).[51]

According to Vīraśaivism, souls are in reality pure, eternal, omniscient and of the nature of Śiva Himself.[52] Just as the sparks

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48 Śivajñāna Siddhiyar. Sūtra. IV. Adhyāya. II. 20.
Translated by Sri J. M. Nallaswamipillai. pp. 205-206.

49 Paśu paśuttva saṁyogat. Śaiva-Siddhānta, p. 69. by Dr. A. V. Devasenapati. pub. by Madras University, 1966.

50 paśavastrividhā jñeyāḥ sakalaḥ pralayākalaḥ
vijñānakala ityeṣāṁ sṛṇudhvaṁ lakṣaṇaṁ kramāt
Pauṣkarāgama. Paśu paṭala. st. 2.

51 māyākarmamalairyuktaḥ sakalastata ucyate
malakarmayuto viprāḥ pralayākala iṣyate
malenaruddhacaitanyo na mukta iti kathyate
dvidhāpyayam samākhyāto viprā vijñānakevalaḥ
Siddhānta sūtravṛtti. p. 30, Bulletin of Govt. Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras. Vol. XVI. No. I. 1963.

52 ātmāyaṁ kevalaḥ śuddhaḥ śivasyāṁśaḥ sadāmalaḥ
nityo nirañjanaśāntaḥ tasmādātmāsvāyaṁ śivaḥ
Śivānubhavasūtra. Adhikaraṇa. V. st. 3.

of fire are not different from fire;[53] in the same way souls are not different from Śiva; but the powers of Śiva (Icchā, Jñāna and Kriyā) are delimited owing to His own sport and become Jīva or soul.

Thus according to Śaiva-siddhānta, souls are regarded as eternal entites and they are different from God. But in the view of Vīraśaivism God is the only reality and eternal entity and souls are not different from God just as the sparks of fire are not different from fire.

Pāśas:

Pāśa is recognised as an eternal entity in Śaiva-siddhānta. Pāśas are the hindrances to enjoy the bliss of Śiva.[54] The three Pāśas *viz.*, Āṇava, Karma and Māyā are eternal and beginningless.

Āṇava mala is the primal bondage for the souls. Āṇava thwarts the cognitive, conative and affective functions of the soul.

Karma mala is the bondage forged by deeds of souls. This mala is associated with the individual souls which enjoy or suffer according to their deeds.

Māyāmala is the material cause of this universe.[55] It is from māyā that the souls are endowed with bodies, worlds and objects of enjoyment. Thus these three impurities are responsible for binding the soul, being in beginningless association with it.

Vīraśaivism also acceptes the three impurities (Malatraya) namely Āṇava, Karma and Māyā. Śiva owing to his own sport contracted his power and became jīva or soul.

The will power (Icchāśakti)[56] of Śiva being contracted becomes the āṇavamala; owing to the effect of it the infinite soul becomes

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53 yathāgneḥ kṣudrāḥ viṣphuliṅgā vyucyaranti evaṁ
etasmādātmanaḥ sarve prāṇā vyucyaranti
Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad. IV. 1. 20.

54 pāśatvaṁ nāma śivānandābhivyaktivirodhitvaṁ
Śaivaparibhāṣā. Ch. IV. p. 73.
pub. by Oriental Research Institute, Mysore.

55 Prādurbhūtaṁ jagatkṛtsnaṁ māyātassacarācaraṁ
jagataḥ kāraṇaṁ māyā māyāyāḥ kāraṇaṁ mune
Śrī Mātaṅga pārameśvarāgama. Vidyāpāda. māyāpaṭala. st. 120.

56 tasmādapratihatasvātantryarūpēcchāśaktiḥ......māyākarma malamucyate
Śivādvaitadarpaṇa. p. 35. quoted by Prof. Sakhare p. 463.

finite. The power of consciousness (Jñānaśakti) of Śiva being limited becomes the māyāmala; owing to the effect of it, the omniscient nature of the soul will become parviscient. The omnipotent power (Kriyāśakti) of Śiva being limited becomes the karmamala; the power of doing and undoing of the soul becomes limited and the soul will reap the fruits of its deeds.

Thus Pāśa is an eternal entity in Śaiva-siddhānta while according to Vīraśaivism the eternal entity is Śiva Himself; but pāśa will come into existence only according to his sport.

Means of realisation according to Śaiva-siddhānta:

The ever kind God created the universe only for the sake of the fettered soul. Śiva assumes the form of Guru and helps the individual soul to attain the final beatitude. Initiation is done by the guru to lead the soul into the spiritual path. Samaya dīkṣā is done in the beginning in order to lead the soul into the Caryāpatha. Initiations of other kinds are also done in several stages according to the mental and spiritual development of the souls.

The release of the soul is accomplished through four means namely caryā, kriyā, yōga and jñāna.

The individual behaves as the servant of God in the caryā. He worships and renders service to the Lord. This is termed as Dāsamārga (servant of God). St. Tirumular is identified with this mārga.

The individual progresses further in his pilgrimage and performs the five kinds of Śuddhi *viz.*, Bhūtaśuddhi, Ātmaśuddhi, Dravyaśuddhi, Mantraśuddhi and Liṅgaśuddhi. The soul is nearer to God in this kriyā (rites) and regards itself as the son of God. This is termed as Satputramārga. St. Tirujñānasaṁbandhar is an exponent of this mārga.

In the yoga mārga the devotee regards himself as loving friend of God and meditates on the Lord. Hence this is also termed as Sakhāmārga. St. Sundarmurti is regarded as the follower of this mārga.

Caryā, kriyā, and yoga mārgas will lead the individual to padmamukti (lesser type of salvation).

These three stages will lead the individual to jñānamārga. The knowledge here is nothing but the true knowledge of the Lord. One realises Śiva and enjoys His supreme bliss. St. Māṇikkavācakar is regarded as the exponent of this mārga. It is to be noted that these four paths constitute different stages in the pilgrim's progress.

Means of Realisation in Vīraśaivism:

Dīkṣā is done to the individual in order to initiate him into the spiritual path. The preceptor performs the three-fold dīkṣā *viz.*, vedhā, mantra and kriyā in order to eradicate the āṇava, māyā and karma fetters and to grant the individual Bhāvaliṅga, Prāṇaliṅga and Iṣṭaliṅga respectively. Dīkṣa is accepted as a means to provide freedom to one and all in the field of salvation. Thus spiritual freedom is granted to all without any distinction of caste, creed or sex etc. After the initiation and obtaining the Iṣṭaliṅga from the Guru, the disciple is required to worship only his Iṣṭaliṅga. Going to the temples is prohibited,[57] and superstitions are discarded.[58] The Guru helps the individual depending upon one's own spiritual progress as Dīkṣāguru, Śīkṣāguru and Mokṣaguru.

The distinct characteristics of Vīraśaivism are Pañcācāra, Aṣṭāvaraṇa and Ṣaṭsthala. Vīraśaivism attaches equal importance to Bhakti, Jñāna and Kriyā. The integral association of these three together accelerates the spiritual progress to attain union with God. The world is regarded as real and hence one need not renounce the world in order to attain salvation. The entire body and senses of the individual are purified by awakening and establishing the six liṅgas in the six senses of the individual.[59] The materials (padārthas) as well as the whole nature is purified by the device of Arcana and Arpaṇa, so that they will be transformed as prasāda, by the enjoyment of which the individual soul is not bound.[60]

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57 Allamana Vacana Candrike, p. 50. v. 212.
Ed. by Dr. L. Basavaraju, Mysore, 1960.

58 Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu, p. 148.
v. 563. Ed. Prof. S. S. Basawanal, Dharwar, 1962.

59 Ref. Sūkṣmāgama. kriyāpāda. VIII. st. 77-84.

60 Arcanārpaṇasāpekṣā vartate dravyaśuddhaye
Arcaṇāddravyaśuddhissyāt prasādastadanantaraṁ

Āvaraṇa is an aid to cross this worldly ocean. There are eight such aids *viz.*, Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Pādōdaka, Prasāda, Vibhūti, Rudrākṣi and Mahāmantra.

Acting in consonance with the advice of a competant guru; reverentially worshipping the Liṅga with utmost devotion; surrendering to Jaṅgama, who is enlightened and moving only for the upliftment of devotees; wearing of Rudrākṣa, besmearing with Vibhūti; acceptance of the pādōdaka of the preceptor; transforming of the objects into Prasāda by offering them to Liṅga and using the same; and repetition of the mahāmantra which stands for God — these are the eight aids which positively help the aspirant to the maximum in his search for Truth. They are technically termed as Aṣṭāvaraṇa.

In the beginning of the spiritual effort there is a distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped[61] (bhakta, deva; upāsya, upāsaka). They are technically termed as Aṅga and Liṅga. This distinction disappears and the devotee is going to become integrally united with Liṅga owing to his ceaseless efforts. This process has been divided into six stages and they are termed as Ṣaṭsthala *viz.*, Bhakta, Maheśa, Prasādi, Prāṇaliṅgi, Śaraṇa and Aikya.

Bhakta is required to offer his devotion to Iṣṭaliṅga which is granted by Guru. He is required to lead a pure and noble life. The devotion at this stage is technically termed as 'Śraddhābhakti.' Bhaktasthala is ascribed to Basavaṇṇa.[62] It is to be noted here Basava had attained the ultimate goal (Aikyasthala), but still in order to do good to mankind he descended to the Bhaktasthala and strove hard for the salvation of mankind.

Then the devotee should have the firm and unflinching faith in Iṣṭaliṅga (Guruliṅga). Morality is observed very strictly. Devotion gradually develops and at this stage it is termed as 'Niṣṭhābhakti.' Maḍivāḷa Mācidēva was an exponent of this sthala.

As the devotee is progressing in his spiritual path he realises the impurities in nature and in the world. By the proper device of

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61 Śūnyasampādane. p. 3. Ed. by Prof. S. S. Bhusanurmath, 1958.

62 Miśrastotrada Vacanagaḷu. vacana 79. by Cennañjedēvaru.

worshipping the Liṅga, the impurities of the objects will be eradicated and prasāda will be obtained. Here the devotee will pay his undivided attention (Avadhānabhakti) to Iṣṭaliṅga (Śivaliṅga). Prasādisthala is ascribed to Cennabasavaṇṇa.

The devotee withdraws his attention from external objects and concentrates his attention inwardly and realises that his individual self (prāṇa) is none other than the universal self (Liṅga). It is characterised by experience of the inner self (Anubhāvabhakti) of Caraliṅga. This Prāṇaliṅgisthala is ascribed to Cendayya.

The devotee experiences in his own self the divine splendour and completely surrenders everything unreservedly to Liṅga and enjoys the pure delight (Ānandabhakti) in Prasādaliṅga. This sthala is termed as Śaraṇasthala and ascribed to Ghaṭṭivāḷayya.

In the final stage even the minor distinction between Aṅga and Liṅga disappears completely. The Aṅga attains its native form which is nothing but Liṅga. As a river mingles with river, the pure Aṅga becomes one with God (Liṅga).[63] This state of unitive consciousness or state of identity is termed as Aikyasthala, the bhakti of this stage is termed as 'Samarasabhakti'. This state is ascribed to Ajagaṇṇa.

Thus Vīraśaivism pays equal importance to Bhakti, Jñāna and Kriyā. It would be clear that one need not run away from this worldly life to attain salvation. It emphasies right and pure living and advocates perfection in all walks of life. It discards superstitions. Social equality and spiritual freedom are granted to one and all without distinction of caste, creed or sect. Dignity of labour is emphasised. Even a Guru is required to earn his bread by labour. It aims at an all-round development and complete sanctification of the individual. Hence Aṣṭāvaraṇa, Pañcācāra and Ṣaṭsthala are introduced. The five codes of conduct (pañcācāra) enable the individual to lead a life of dignity befitting the highest human principle. The aṣṭāvaraṇa will help the individual positively to

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63 Basavaṇṇanavara Ṣaṭsthalada Vacanagaḷu. p. 249. v. 929.
Ed. by Prof. S. S. Basavanal, Dharwar, 1962.

the maximum in his spiritual pursuit. The Ṣaṭsthala indicates the spiritual development of one's spiritual efforts to integrally become one with God. Vīraśaivism therefore aims at establishing brotherhood among men and elevating them morally, socially and spiritually. Thus Vīraśaivism is a unique contribution at once to philosophy as well as to mysticism.

H. P. MALLEDEVARU

One still can stand where burnt the hearth:
But could one stand where burnt the earth?
When the bank, thirsty, drinks the stream,
And the fence turns around to graze,
The wife at home to thievish ways,
And mother's milk to poisonous cream —
And all seems part of a crazy dream —
*To whom should I complain, O Lord?**

VĪRAŚAIVISM AND ADVAITA

II

It is often said that Indian philosophy is a way of life rather than a view of it. This statement is particularly true of a religious system in Indian thought which goes with the name 'Vīraśaivism'. It is one of the living faiths in Śaivism and it is very popular in Southern parts of India. Most of its literature is found in Kannaḍa which is the language of the people.

Vīraśaivism is predominantly a mystic religion. As it is true of other mystic religions even Vīraśaivism refuses to rely too much on scriptural evidence. The most infallible source of spiritual knowledge according to them is to be found in one's own inner revelation. The guide for spiritual life and the test of its growth is within and not so much in the external. The progress in spiritual life is sequential and it stops not till the anguish of the seeker is fully satiated and the highest spiritual union is attained.

It is hardly possible to trace the main tenets of Vīraśaivism to any one given scripture or a source book. It agrees with many of the traditional schools of Indian philosophy in certain respects but at the same time it is original in its main character. Hence it is considered as highly dynamic and somewhat revolutionary. Attempts are made by the commentators like Śrīpati Paṇḍita and Nīlakaṇṭha Śivācārya to interpret Vīraśaivism in the light of Vedic traditions. But this is not the whole truth of it. The Vacanas which are the

mystic outpourings of Vīraśaiva saints who flourished in the 12th century A. D. contain many statements which disapprove the Vedic authority. We cannot disregard these statements as of less importance since they are very categorical in criticising the ritualism of the Vedas and also the Varṇāśrama Dharma which is an accepted doctrine of the Vedic traditions. Hence it appears as if the agreement or the disagreement that may be found between Vīraśaivism and any other Indian school of philosophy is only incidental and does not always warrant us to trace their mutual influences.

II

With this general preparation, we can now enter into our immediate problem, namely, the possible relations between Vīraśaivism and Advaita. Advaita is one of the most influential schools of Indian philosophy and it is second to none in its popularity among the idealistic thinkers of the world.

The most striking similarity between these two schools is that both of them are absolutistic in character, though in their own way. Vīraśaivism is absolutistic to the extent that it traces the plurality of the individual self and the phenomenal world, the jīva and jagat, to the One ultimate source, namely, Śiva. Śiva the Absolute of Vīraśaivism has Śakti or the potency which is His inseparable nature. In its theistic sense Śiva is represented as ardhanārīśvara the semblance of Śiva and Śakti, and Śakti being understood in a figurative sense as 'nāri' the consort of Śiva. The Absolute of Vīraśaivism is not a Nirguṇa Brahman since He retains His potency even at the highest state, may be in a contracted or subdued form. The Absolute of Advaita on the other hand admits of being viewed from two standpoints, a standpoint for which Brahman is Saguṇa and a standpoint for which Brahman is Nirguṇa. Saguṇa Brahman, the Absolute being superimposed by Māyā is called Īśvara, Brahman with no superimposition is their real Absolute.

Since the Absolute of Vīraśaivism retains Śakti as being His own nature, Vīraśaivism is also recognised as qualified Monism but

qualified with Śakti, Śakti-viśiṣṭādvaita. But we have to make a distinction between Vīraśaivism and the other schools which accept the positions of qualified Monism, without which we are apt to misunderstand its real position. Vīraśaivism differs considerably from Viśiṣṭādvaita of Ramānuja since the attribute and the subject of attributes do not ultimately merge into unity in Rāmānuja. Jīva who is an attribute of Nārāyaṇa which according to Viśiṣṭādvaita cannot become one with Nārāyaṇa even at the state of highest realisation. A Mukta, the God-realised soul in his system cannot claim the overlordship (Lokasaṅgrahatva) of the universe, but he prefers to remain at the closest proximity of the Lord fully lost in devotions (prapatti) enjoying the grace and glory of the Lord Nārāyaṇa. It is here we find theism being worked out into its greatest perfection.

A liberated soul according to Vīraśaivism cannot retain the individuality even to the minimum extent, rather he becomes Śiva and that state is technically called 'Aikya' or the union. Hence it is appropriate to call Vīraśaivism as being both theistic and also as absolutistic. Its theism which is pantheistic as well, is only a stage in the evolution of the individual towards the spiritual realisation. The highest state of spiritual attainment lies in experiencing the One Absolute which is both within and without. In order to explain this unique position of Vīraśaivism the writers on this system including Dr. Nandimath, a distinguished thinker on this philosophy, prefer to employ the term Viśeṣādvaita, the absolutism of a *unique* type.

Māyā is the counterpart in Advaita which is analogous to Śakti of Vīraśaivism. Both Śakti and Māyā have to serve similar purpose in their respective system. Still one cannot compare favourably, with the other, because Māyā is that which 'is not' and hence it is unreal and an illusion. Whereas Śakti is not so. Māyā is only a superimposition on the Real namely Brahman. In order to explain how an unreal Māyā gets relation with Brahman which is real, Advaita has its own systematic explanation the details of which fall outside the scope of this article. Śakti of Vīraśaivism admits of two states, a state at which it is contracted (*saṅkocana*) and a state at which it is expanded (*vikāsa*). In this respect it may remind

us of Prakṛti of Sāṁkhya system. Unlike Prakṛti of Sāṁkhya, Śakti is always associated with Śiva and it is not dualistic in the sense of Sāṁkhya. Further, Prakṛti of Sāṁkhya is independent of Puruṣa though while in evolution it gets associated with Puruṣa.

Such metaphysical distinction between Advaita and Vīraśaivism has been considerably responsible for their difference in cosmology as well as in their religious practices. Vīraśaivism borders on pantheism and this character is very well brought out in the Vacanas of Śrī Basaveśvara and Akkamahādēvi. While searching for Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama, Basaveśvara says, "wherever I cast my glance, there you are, my God; the form of all space you are, my God; universal eye you are, my God; universal mouth you are, my God, Oh my beloved Lord." Akkamahādēvi speaks the same truth in her own language. "All groves You are, all trees in groves You are, all animals and birds that play in the trees are You. Oh, Cannamallikārjuna You are everything, disclose yourself to me." Since God is concealed in the animate and the inanimate the devotee has to pray to Him so that He may reveal Himself.

Śiva who is one without a second assumes the existence within Himself and allows His potency namely Śakti to expand into the form of the universe like the solid butter expands itself into the liquid state. It is out of joy and for the sport that Śiva turns out to be jīva and develops a sense of false identifications. Hence his bondage and its consequence namely suffering. But this is not an insurmountable condition of jīva. As jīva is Śiva in the sublated sense, he can also play out of his own bondage. To enable the liberation of jīva from bondage, Vīraśaivism has offered a course of practical disciplines which is popularly known as Ṣaṭsthala Siddhānta, a doctrine of sixfold spirituality. The conquest of the play of Śakti in its cosmic sense is symbolised in the ecstatic dance of Naṭarāja.

III

Vīraśaivism has worked out its practical discipline to its most perfect form. Its spiritual discipline is consistent with its metaphysical

position. It is dualistic in the beginning and absolutistic at the end. The seeker after God recognises duality in the initial stages of the religious practice but as he advances in his spiritual journey he experiences a transforming unity within himself. At the end the multiplicity vanishes and unity alone survives. To enable such transformations Vīraśaivism has offered a scheme of discipline which accepts Bhakti (devotion) Karma (action) and Jñāna (knowledge). Vīraśaivism has felt that no one path by itself is sufficient for the purpose of divinising human nature which is the aggregate of different faculties like knowing, feeling and willing. So the divine touch must work its wonders on all these faculties of man.

The peculiar blending of Bhakti, Jñāna and Karma in order to make an integral path of spirituality is a special feature of Vīraśaivism. In this respect it differs considerably from Advaita and also from many of the theistic schools. Advaita which explained bondage of the soul in the world with the help of Avidya or ignorance should naturally think of a spiritual discipline which confers right awareness on the individual and thus dispels his ignorance. The spiritual practice should provide such an awakening from the dogmatic slumber, a sense of finiteness which is superimposed on the Infinite. The practice of moral life, reflection and meditation are all meant to serve the purpose of such spiritual awakening. Hence the practical discipline centres round Jñāna or the path of knowledge.

The Ṣaṭsthala mārga is a special contribution of Vīraśaiva saints to the philosophic literature. Liṅgadhāraṇa to mean to wear the symbol of Śiva in the form of Liṅga on one's body is one of the fundamental characteristics of Vīraśaivism. The initial step in Ṣatsthala is called Bhaktasthala and during this stage the aspirant after God retains the distinction between the devotee and the Divine, jīva and Śiva and hence its main character is one of devotion or Bhakti. The pursuit of spiritual ideal can be better accomplished in an atmosphere of joy and bliss. In fact some of the musings of Vīraśaiva saints contain a rapturous enthusiasm for Lord Śiva.

As the result of such devotion to the Lord Śiva the jīva gets purified within himself by overcoming the passion and the ego. He

feels an expansion in his inner nature and begins to act with a sense of service to the entire creation. To do good to all the creatures is the nature of the person who has ascended to Māheśvara sthala, a state next to Bhakta sthala. He practices morality and religion with perfect sincerity. The next state in the order is called Prasādi-sthala a state at which one practices niṣkāma karma or the action with detachment. He receives the reward of his labour as if it is the grace of the Divine. Prasāda means the grace of the Lord, all that comes to the Prasādi is received with no agitation since it is the Divine Grace. "Kāyakave Kailāsa," or work is worship, is the special message of this stage. Irrespective of one's status or possessions, whether a Guru, a Liṅga or a Jaṅgama, every one should learn to labour with a sense of detachment. Dependence on others is a taboo in this religion.

If the earlier three states of Ṣaṭsthala lay more stress on devotion and action the latter three stages of it are meant for the development of Jñāna. The fourth state which is called Prāṇaliṅgi favours the experience of oneness between Prāṇa, the individual self and Liṅga the Śiva. The impression of duality begins to vanish and the resulting unity is slowly felt. The fifth stage is called Śaraṇasthala and at this stage Bhakti transforms itself and the seeker surrenders everything to God. Dr. Nandimath compares Śaraṇa to the Sthitaprajña of Bhagavadgītā. So a Śaraṇa feels the intimate communion with the Divine.

The sixth and the last state of spiritual journey called Aikya-sthala is the state in which there is complete union of the individual with the Universal. This is the state of Liberation according to Vīraśaivism, a state in which Liṅga and Aṅga, Śiva and jīva are merged into unity, Liṅgāṅgasāmarasya as it is technically called in this religion.

A. L. SHIVARUDRAPPA

VĪRAŚAIVISM AND VAIṢṆAVISM

I

Vīraśaivism and Vaiṣṇavism form the two outstanding phases of the great Bhakti movement that took shape in medieval Karnāṭak and constitute the basic structure of Karnāṭaka culture. Worship of Śiva was there even before the emergence of Vīraśaivism, but the distinct formation of a complete system of thought and way of life centering round a passionate devotion to Śiva is the work of the great saints and sages of Vīraśaivism. Contemporaneous with this crystallization of Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism shaped itself into a vigorous and comprehensive view of life under the leadership of Rāmānuja and Madhva. Rāmānuja made Karnāṭak his second home and established in it active centres of spiritual culture, whereas Madhva is of Karnāṭak and has contributed to the rich heritage of Indian philosophy, and the major domain of his activity was Karnāṭak. I propose to discuss some of the leading philosophical ideas and springs of cultural inspiration characteristic of these two phases of the Bhakti movement in Karnāṭak bringing out their basic affinities and divergences, if any.

II

Bhakti movement involves a fundamental conception of Ideal life. It censures the life of hedonism and conceives of the purpose

of life as the adoration of the Supreme. It also involves a transvaluation of religious values from this standpoint and rejects religious formalism and excessive adherence to external and traditional ritualism. The inwardness of life consisting of the soul's yearning for God takes the first place in spiritual life. As the supreme object of spiritual love is God, who is looked upon as the immanent principle of all life, moral life shifts its centre of gravity from ceremonial uprightness to the comprehensive principle of the love of all life as the embodiment and manifestation of the central divine reality. In the intellectual sphere also a corresponding revaluation in orientation takes place. Philosophy as the analysis and criticism of categories is subordinated to the ideal of philosophy as the search for God, the reality of realities. Mere intellectualism is abandoned and a fervent contemplation of the highest comes to constitute the meaning of Jñāna. Such a Jñāna is no cold exercise of the intellect but the complete dedication of all the powers of the spirit to the one rapturous endevour after the ultimate, which is the integral Infinite of Reality and value, Satya and Ānanda. God as the supreme value renders a loveless apprehension of God an impossibility. Even as formal righteousness yields place to the loving service of all that lives with the living consciousness of the all-permeating Divinity, knowledge as the abstract reconstruction of reality is replaced by the exciting adventure of the spirit in man towards the abundance of life that lies in the living communion with God. Thus there is a transformation of both the ideals of conduct and of thought under the sublimating inspiration of the ideal of love. The two aspects of life are also integrated into the one ideal of worship, which is at once an activity and a contemplation under the one over-mastering passion for Communion. There is no scope for either a pursuit of spirituality bereft of activity or for absorption in works without the practice of the presence of God. The ideal of Bhakti furnishes the central principle for organizing the entire spiritual life, doing away with the imperfect ideals of thought and conduct and superseding the false antagonism of contemplation and action. Without it, the culture of the soul would lose its way in impoverishment and fragmentation.

III

The metaphysical tenet common to all the schools of thought forming the Bhakti movement may be broadly characterized. It constitutes the core of the philosophy of both· Vīraśaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. Ultimate Reality, according to the movement, is the infinite spirit named Brahman in the Upaniṣads and Īśvara in later theistic systems. Īśvara is absolute in existence, in consciousness and perfection. He transcends the cosmos and is also its sustaining ground. He is both cosmic and supra-cosmic. All the philosophical schools of Śaivism including even Kashmir Śaivism and the two versions of Vaiṣṇavism are opposed to the view of the world of finite existence as merely phenomenal or illusory. Vīraśaivism also in its final analysis rejects the illusionist conception of the world. Hence the ultimate principle is not abstract or merely transcendent and acosmic but has inherent in itself a concrete, cosmic and creative dimension also. Śiva and Śakti consitute the two aspects of the one individual Absolute. From this fundamental position regarding Īśvara, certain inevitable corollaries follow with regard to the ontological status of the physical universe and individual selves. It is true that in Vīraśaivism the deduction of these corollaries takes divergent directions in the works of the different mystical philosophers and a consolidated and unambiguous statement of the doctrines concerning the matter is not easy. But the initial affirmation of the absolute as at once transcendent and immanent, timelessly immutable as well as creative, supre-cosmic as well as cosmic, is nerver abandoned or modified by any principal exponent or treatise.

IV

While so much is common to both Vīraśaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, when we come to the theological characterization of God, differences become noticeable. In Vīraśaivism the supreme Deity is named Śiva and the term carries an immensity of mythological and purāṇic associations. In the same way, the alternative designation of God

as Viṣṇu, has its own rich conventional significance. While philosophy seems to point to a fundamental affinity of outlook, theologies break up the Bhakti movement into two different tendencies. The two gods of traditional Hinduism, bear different sets of distinctive names, are believed to be endowed with different divine forms, are said to be surrounded by two different sets of devoted divine beings and are glorified in two distinctive groups of religious narratives. This huge volume of theological material backing up the devotion to these two deities splits the devotional religion into two rival camps.

While originally God Śiva was looked upon as responsible for the cosmic activity of destruction, God Viṣṇu was held the God of preservation. As long as this distinction of functions was strictly believed in, there was no room for conflict. But this was an unnatural equilibrium. A triad of Gods, Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva is no monotheism. Hence two attempts were made to exalt one of the Gods, to the position of the Supreme Deity. Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism are the results of these attempts. In Śaivism the conception of destruction underwent appropriate sublimation and came to signify the destruction of all that was evil. In this process of redemption from evil, the creation and preservation of the world of mortals, naturally came to be considered subordinate movements. No cosmic activity attributed to God remains outside the realm of the activity of conquest over evil and the establishment of the good. Corresponding to this exaltation of the function associated with Śiva, a similar enrichment of the of the notion of preservation ascribed to Viṣṇu took place. Preservation or protection came to be conceived in the spiritual sense of fostering the individuals in their march towards perfection and there is no cosmic function of the God-head that is not included as a subordinate phase in this comprehensive work of soul-making. When the two Gods are thus understood in this widened perspective, there remains nothing to distinguish them. Only the differences in time-honoured symbols associated with the worship of them remain and also the different mythological backgrounds mingling with the two conceptions. What is only secondary in the two total complexes of ideas, sentiments, inherited rituals and stories serves to maintain

the vanishing line of demarcation between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. But the problem of doing away with the conventional material is not easy of solution. The two bodies of tradition have many elements of great beauty and spiritual worth and to discard them all would impoverish the Bhakti movement itself. The great challenge is to achieve universality of religion without the attenuation of content. There are two ways of meeting the challenge. There should be a progressive minimization of the mythological appendage. This appears to be the way that has been mostly adopted by Vīraśaivism. The other is to translate the mythological material into universally intelligible philosophical concepts and principles, so that the symbols, rituals and the psedo-historical narratives are rendered vehicles of devout reflections on the grandeur of God and the sublimity of man's longing for Him. Vaiṣṇavism has largely followed this method of solution. Hence in Vaiṣṇavism as a whole the mythological background and the theological presentation of religion exhibit a tendency to persist. In the Karnāṭak also, the Haridāsas dwell more on the Divine Avatāras and the beauty of the divine Form than the Vīraśaiva Vacanakāras. It looks as if the traditional matter enters this substance of Vaiṣṇavism deeper and forms a comparatively more tenacious adjunct, than the Śaivite mythology in relation to the essence of Śaivism.

There is one remarkable feature about some of the purāṇic stories and forms associated with the deities that has aided the process of de-mythologizing. The meaning emerging from the literal inter--pretation of a particular legend and the spiritual meaning extracted by the allegorical interpretation of the same are often found to coincide. This makes the choice of interpretation a matter of minor importance. It goes to indicate that the original inspiration behind the legend also proceeded from deeper and more universal ideas. When the whole import of this situation is grasped, the phenomenon of theological divergence does not figure as an insurmountable barrier to unification of vision.

V

The distinctive contribution of Vīraśaivism is its theory of

Ṣaṭsthala in the realm of Sādhana. A significant plan of spiritual endeavour is embodied in this theory. Its three principal features may be noted at once. (*a*) It takes account of the whole nature of man and inculcates a discipline of activity, emotion and contemplation. (*b*) While it starts with the outward practice of religion dominantly consisting of deeds of piety, there is a progressive internalization of religious life culminating in the purely inward and contemplative realization of God. (*c*) In the initial stages of spiritual life the devout contemplation of God as the 'wholly other' is commended and as the spirit progresses and matures an ever-increasing integration of the worshipper and the supreme object of worship takes place as a matter of spiritual evolution. The process culminates in 'unitive' life.

A corresponding provision in Vaiṣṇavism is, of course, inevitable for the theory of Sādhana is an integral part of the Bhakti movement as a whole. In the Vaiṣṇava schools the Gītā furnishes the framework of Sādhana. We have the four paths of Karma, Jñāna, Yoga and Bhakti. The Vaiṣṇava traditions of both Rāmānuja and Madhva, attach the greatest value to Bhakti and regard it as the ultimate means of God-realization. The process starts with Karma-yoga, progresses through Jñāna, reaches the stage of intuitive realization named Yoga in the narrower sense and culminates in the supreme ardour of parā Bhakti. The main principles inculcated in the Ṣaṭ-sthala programme are there in the Vaiṣṇava Sādhana also. There are two conspicuous points of difference. (*a*) In the Vaiṣṇava conception of spiritual progress, no gradual growth out of an initial dualism to an ultimate monism seems to have been envisaged. Divine transcendence and Divine immanence are equal verities and undergo no alteration of importance and validity in the course of the spiritual maturation of the Sādhaka. (*b*) In the final stage of 'unitive life' also the individuality of the finite soul abides as the bearer of the fullest life and in the rapture of the greatest union with God. The opposition to the Advaitic idea of Mokṣa is more marked in Vaiṣṇavism than in Vīraśaivism. If Advaita is adopted at this stage an appropriate revision of fundamentals is called for and Vīraśaivism

so revised would be only a re-edition of the unqualified Non-dualism of Śaṅkara. A doctrinal decision on this question is no matter of minor importance from the standpoint of the philosophical identity and the unique historical rôle of Vīraśaivism.

VI

In the practical sphere of social ethics the Bhakti movement as a whole strikes a revolutionary note in Hindu culture. While early Hinduism contains no glorification of violence and is not without regard to human life as such irrespective of social distinctions, it did not advocate the principles of Ahiṁsā and equality with all the force that they merit. Jainism and Buddhism took up these partially recognized ideals and championed them with utmost zeal as principles of conduct worthy of unconditional observance. Bhakti movement preached the God of infinite love and tender mercy as immanent in all that lives, working for the perfection of all Souls. Owing to the impact of the ethical teachings of the heretical religions and as a practical deduction from its own conception of God, the Bhakti movement liberated the ethical consciousness of Hinduism from the old insufficiencies and boldly and emphatically proclaimed the ideals of ahiṁsā and equality. Thus compassion towards all life and the transgression of social gradations in the realm of the love of God became common traits of the religion of Bhakti all over the country. Differences among the different versions of the Bhakti cult lie only in the degree of vehemence with which they break away from the older moral conventions not recognizing the absoluteness of ahimsa and the democratic fraternity of devotees. But the direction of teaching is fundamentally the same. All life is entitled to equal valuation and all men are equally entitled to practise the glorious life of devotion to God. While these teachings are incorporated in the lives and teachings of the two sects of Vaiṣṇavism, particularly in the tradition of the Āḻvārs and Haridāsās, they are asserted with exceptional force in the Vīraśaiva doctrine and practice. The consequence is that Vīraśaivism opposes the cult of sacrifice, liberalizes the sentiment of

humanity so as to embrace the whole of mankind without the distinctions of birth or sex and affirms the equal spiritual potentialities of all. The social order founded on such principles would be truly a new one, translating into reality the lofty ideals of Hinduism. But the conservatism of man is deep-rooted and the old hierarchic social system still persists with the result that the Vīraśaiva community has become an exclusive caste within the complex of castes claiming for itself the highest rank in the social pyramid. Social discriminations have penetrated into the Vīraśaiva society itself modifying the original democratic ideology.

In Vaiṣṇavism the revolution never proceeded so far and no open repudiation of the caste order ever took place, though the forces undermining the inherited inequalities of status and social valuation have been actively functioning all along. There is an unresolved spiritual conflict in the social philosophy of the Bhakti movement. The rights and wrongs of the case are clear from the standpoint of Bhakti but the social realities are yet to rise to the requirements of the ideal of Bhakti. The religious consciousness is in advance of the moral power. The transformation of the actual into the ideal condition requires great care, for it happens not infrequently that the technique of social change adopted might involve the destruction of the very ideals which are being pursued. It is not that the end justifies the means; rather the means must demonstrate by its own intrinsic moral quality the superiority of the end.

VII

Consistently with the general humanitarianism of the Bhakti movement, its great saints both in Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism have laboured hard to spread the gospel of divine love among the masses. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the Gītā that he who carries his message to his devotee is practising the highest form of devotion. This has to be done in the medium of the masses and hence the Bhakti movement has been an inexhaustible source of great devotional literature in the

vernaculars. This is so in Vīraśaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. The immense body of this inspired literary production is a priceless heritage of Karnāṭak. The habit of according the second place to non-sanskritic literature is done away with completely and the outpourings of Śiva Śaraṇas, Āḷvārs and Haridāsas are placed on a footing of equality with the Vedas from the standpoint of sanctity and are even placed higher on the ground of their universal accessibility. The highest thoughts of God are clothed in the language of the most moving poetry and are placed at the disposal of all. God literally comes to the common man in the words of the Saints. The saints have been the greatest educators of the common man in Karnāṭak. No wonder we can never be too grateful to them.

VIII

There is phenomenal correspondence between Vīraśaivism and Vaiṣṇavism in their teachings concerning the first and last things. Both of them insist on a righteous mode of earning one's means of livelihood. The prescription in Vīraśaivism is crystallized in the precept of 'Kāyaka', honest bodily labour to maintain oneself. Rāmānuja while explaining the notion of 'Āhāra-śuddhi' in the course of his commentary on the Gītā, maintains that 'pure food' signifies what remains over, after one has met all the sacrificial obligations of life, out of what one has earned through righteous means. Honesty of source and the prior fulfilment of ethical obligations through it confers on what remains the required sanctity. Both in Vīraśaivism and Vaiṣṇavism the ideal of self-surrender to God is accorded the highest place in the scheme of Sādhana. In Vīraśaivism what follows Śaraṇasthala, is the consummation of the whole course of Sādhana in 'unitive life'. Aikya-sthala is the *phala* and not *sādhana*. Hence the offering of one's totality of being to the supreme in the act of self-surrender is the supreme phase of Sādhana. Vaiṣṇavism takes inspiration from the final message of the Gītā and regards *prapatti* or *śaraṇāgati* as the ultimate point of human effort in winning the redemptive grace of God. This is so in the doctrines

of both Rāmānuja and Madhva. Though the former elaborates the conception of prapatti a great deal, Madhva also does accord to it all the pre-eminence intended in the teaching of the Gītā. There is a great tradition in Indian thought of compressing the entire teaching of a school of thought in a single formula. Advaita Vedānta sees in the 'Tat-Twaṁ-Asi' of the Upaniṣads the whole content of philosophy and the completest guidance for spiritual development. It is the Mahā-vākya. Similarly Vaiṣṇavism sees in the devotional formula 'Auṁ Namo Nārāyaṇāya' the entire philosophy of Vaiṣṇavism and the whole process of spiritual realization. To understand it thoroughly, it is said, is to comprehend Reality and to perform the adoration it signifies, in word, deed and thought, is the completest Sādhana. It is a devotional formula, a mantra, in significant contrast to the other formula, which is just a Vākya, a proposition intellectually summing up the entire philosophy of Monism. Analogous to the Vaiṣṇava tradition, Vīraśaivism takes its stand on and promulgates the Mahā Mantra. 'Auṁ-Namaḥ-Śivāya.' The formula enshrines in itself the entire treasure of spiritual knowledge and to live into the Mantra with the totality of one's personality is the road to the completest and final self-fulfilment in Śiva.

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

VĪRAŚAIVISM AND BUDDHISM

The study of religion and that of science also, should not prove, if taken up in the correct perspective, detrimental to the all round development of humanity. They are, no doubt, two radically different ways of looking at reality. But both explore the possibilities of opening new avenues of knowledge. Religion leads to inward progress, whilst science leads to outward progress. Religion opens our eyes to the realisation of spiritual values. It provides us with an answer to the problems regarding the meaning of life and of the universe. After all, religion is the name given to that phase of human activity which leads human beings to strive to reach higher and higher levels of inward progress tending towards the final goal of perfection.

This quest after perfection has been the dominating motive of human life throughout the ages, right from the beginning of the cave man upto the most modern scientific man. It is the hidden meaning of all human endeavour. It is expressed through several phases of human action which is controlled and guided by one predominating principle, namely, the unfolding of perfection in man. All the arts, the ethical and aesthetic activities, all scientific investigation and social reconstruction, all the political theories and profound philosophies are ultimately gathered up by religion or quest after this ultimate destiny which it really means.

But it cannot be denied that true religion has come to be vitiated by human frailty which has sometimes led to tragic conclusions.

In the name of religion all kinds of social discrimination came to be perpetrated. Casteism is an example of it. In some respects, religion has even acted as an opiate to reconcile themselves to things like social injustice and inhumanity like untouchability. Religion, thus, instead of giving life, strength, and illumination turned out to be, now and then, an instrument of exploitation, discrimination, inequality, corruption, superstition and dogmatism. In the modern age, when the emergence of a new society is being envisaged and when there is an increasing realisation of the unity of the human race as at no time before in human history, our attitude undergoes naturally a radical change. Our study of religion also has to become scientific and objective. Our pursuit of perfection can only be fulfilled, individually as well as collectively, if we endeavour to cleanse our religions from superstition, narrowness and fanaticism. "Science without religion" as Einstein puts it, "is blind, and religion without science is lame." It may be stated that in these new circumstances, the study of religion in a scientific and objective way has acquired a fresh importance.

Though the predominating motive behind religion is one, namely the pursuit of perfection, the methods of attaining it, happen to be many. Different religions of the world are nothing but the result of meeting several situations that arose among peoples of different lands and at various periods of human history. In India, the development of the inner life of man became the centre and the keynote of the whole harmony of national life. The Indian mind with its extraordinary analytical power, put forth several theories, regarding the nature of man and the cosmos, relation between man and God, goals of human life and endeavour and the like. These varied efforts gave rise to different religious schools of thought and several sects like Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, Dvaita, Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita and the like in Hinduism itself, along with religions like Buddhism and Jainism. Buddhism and Jainism came to be looked upon as non-vedic schools of thought. They were in a way revolts against the development of certain undesirable features that appeared in the later developments of Hinduism. The purpose

of this article is to attempt a brief and comparative study of Buddhism and Vīraśaivism; the latter is an important branch of Śaivism in India.

If we glance at the historical development of the religions of the world, we see that each system of thought develops in accordance with the specific needs of the day, and reflects the tendencies of the time. Buddhism is no exception to this. At the time when Buddha was born (567 B.C.) the religious atmosphere of the country was not very conducive to human progress.

The lofty ideals of the Upaniṣads had suffered a decline. The vedic religion had completely degenerated with empty formalism and ritualism. The original inspiration had vanished. Upaniṣads had become sealed books to the masses and knowledge of them had come to be confined to the selected community of people. Society had undergone a division into many watertight compartments. Puerile superstitions came to prevail among the masses. Meaningless rituals were being observed and encouraged by a priesthood which had become a jealous custodian of all ancient learning. Religious and social exploitation became the order of the day. Buddha fought against all these social and religious evils. He started to preach a religion independent of all meaningless ritualism and laid all emphasis on righteousness instead of on ritualism. Buddha came, it may be stated, as a sort of reaction and revolt against empty ritualism and social discrimination.

Vīraśaivism is not to be looked upon as a creed which was started by any single individual. It is an offshoot of Śaivism which is one of the main branches of Hinduism. Though the early history of Vīraśaivism is very obscure, it is certain that the principal tenets of this system enunciated in several Śaiva Āgamās have taken deep root in the Indian soil from the very early times and have influenced the culture of the country to a considerable extent. Sri S. N. Dasgupta in his "History of Indian Philosophy (Vol. V) says: "The kernel of Vīraśaiva thought is almost as early as the Upaniṣads and it may be found in more or less systematic manner by way of suggestion in the

writings of Kāḷidāsa who lived in the early centuries of the Christian era."

But it must be admitted that the movement was activated in Karnāṭak in the 12th century by the Śaraṇas, or Vīraśaiva Saints, headed by Basavaṇṇa who gave a new dimension and vision to the religion. Basavaṇṇa rejuvenated and vitalized Vīraśaivism and made it a handy instrument for the uplift of the people. This school came to be popularly known as Lingāyata.

At the time when Basava appeared on the scene, the conditions were even worse than they were, at the time when Buddha was born. Society was in the stronghold of casteism and suffered by the intrusion into it of blind belief and superstition. The vast majority of the people were sunk in ignorance; and inhuman practices like untouchability were weakening the social structure. In the hour of such a crucial need Basava took up Vīraśaiva religion and made it a vehicle to proclaim his universal message of a religion of humanity.

In this respect Buddhism and Vīraśaism played an equally important rôle in the religious history of India. There is another striking similarity between the two schools of thought. Buddha preached his message speaking the common language of the people. Basava also chose the language of the people *i.e.*, Kannaḍa for the very purpose. With the pious desire that religion should reach every man and woman, he conveyed his redemptive message through the language of the people, in the form of what are called Vacanas or aphorisms couched in rhythmic prose. Under the leadership of Basavaṇṇa all Śaraṇas rallied together and discussed freely the problems of the day and also devoted themselves to the elucidation of eternal human problems. The knowledge that has emanated out of these discussions, the Vacana literature that gave beautiful expression to these truths, form an unforgettable chapter in the history of Karnāṭak.

Apart from this similarity there are some ethical teachings common to both the religions. There are, at the same time, some fundamental differences also regarding the philosophic and religious aspects of these systems. We shall try to get a bird's-eye-view of

these two schools by way of comparing them in their fundamentals.

Every religion must have more or less a philosophical basis which usually includes five fields of study namely — Logic, Aesthetics, Ethics, Politics and Metaphysics. Here are a few observations mainly from the metaphysical point of view. Buddhism, particularly early Buddhism, was averse to all theoretical speculations. Buddha did not indulge in metaphysical speculations. Even with regard to the fundamental questions like God, the created universe, and man, he was silent. He did not desire to load religion with metaphysical speculations. His intense desire was to find a way out of the intricate and complicated systems that were prevalent then. He wanted to pave the way which could be followed by the common people. So his stress was towards the ethical and psychological aspects of religion.

But, though philosophical speculation was not prominent in his teachings, yet it has to be admitted that there was a kind of philosophical view underlying it. A short time after Buddha's death, his disciples assembled and arranged his teachings in tripīṭakas (*i.e.*, Baskets): Abhidamma pīṭaka, Vinaya pīṭaka, and Sutta pīṭaka. They were transmitted through a regular succession of teachers and disciples orally upto 80 B.C., when they were reduced to writing. On the basis of these Pāli canons and also based on the works of later writers like Nāgasēna, Buddha Ghoṣa and other scholars, they have tried to analyse the philosophical aspects of religion. In fact three principal turning points have been pointed out in Buddhism.

(1) Earlier realistic and pluralistic phases: Hināyāna, Thērāvaḍa and Vaibhāṣika schools may be included here.

(2) Middle phase *i.e.*, Mādhyamika system of Nāgārjuna and Ārya Deva who advocated Śūnya Vāda.

(3) The final idealistic phase: the Yogācāra system of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu may be included here. Without going into the details of these schools a succinct account of broad philosophic approach of this religion may be given here.

Buddhistic philosophy according to some, is known as the analysis

of separate elements which are called forces. These elements or forces unite in the production of one stream of event and it is known as "Saṁtāna." The elements of this stream are called Dhātus. The stream of an individual self which is the component of a bigger stream reveals the elements of eighteen different dhātus.

In the first instance there is another broad and simple classification of elements into five groups which are called five Skandhas. They are:

1. Rūpa Skandha (Matter)
2. Vedana Skandha (Feelings)
3. Samjña Skandha (Ideas)
4. Saṁskāra Skandha (Volitions)
5. Vijñāna Skandha (pure sensation or general consciousness).

There is also a more detailed classification of elements called Āyatana which means entrance. Āyatana, it is said, is an entrance for consciousness and mental phenomena. There are twelve Āyatanas of whom six are cognitive faculties (Ādhyātma Āyatana, Cakṣur Indriya Āyatana etc.) and another six are categories of corresponding objects (Rūpa Āyatana, Śabda Āyatana etc.). We need not get into the coil of this classification, which is a characteristic feature of Buddhism. Sufficient here it is to note that it gives a division of all objects of cognition into two *i.e.*, sense objects and non-sense objects. Then it goes on to divide the elements of visibility into two groups: colours and shapes. Then we have the elements of mind analysed. One comprehensive and significant division that we come across here, is that all elements are divided into substances and forces, Dravya and Saṁskāra. Mental faculties come under Saṁskāra. Thus Buddhists converted all elements into subtle forces. The whole creation comes under this classification. Creation is nothing but an incessant flow (Saṁtāna) of these elements.

According to Buddhist philosophy these elements or subtle forces (or dharmas as they are called) have four salient features, namely,

1. all dharmas (elements) are anātman
2. all Samskrita dharmas (*i.e.*, impermanent elements of phenomenal existence) are anitya.
3. all sasvava dharmas (*i.e.*, elements of the ordinary man as

opposed to the purified condition of elements of a saint) are dukha.

4. the Nirvāṇa also is Śānta.

The first feature of the elements *i.e.*, anātman is usually translated as non-soul and so Buddhism is called anātmavāda or nairātmya-vāda (the system of non-soul). But here Ātma is synonymous with personality and Buddhism never denied the existence of a personality or a soul but it only maintained that it was not ultimate reality. Ātma is anitya (not eternal) and it is encircled with Dukha (misery). Nirvāṇa also is Śānta which is the ultimate value of life. So according to Buddha there is no eternal Ātma in the Hindu sense of the term. Before we proceed to examine the nature of Nirvāṇa and also the path of attaining it, we shall have a glimpse at the philosophic aspect of Vīraśaivism.

Vīraśaivism is enunciated in our ancient scriptures called Śaiva Āgamas. Later works like "Siddānta Śikhāmaṇi," "Śrīkara Bhāṣya," "Liṅgadhāraṇa Candrike," "Śivānubhava Sūtra," "Kriyā Sāra." etc., in Sanskrit have expounded the Vīraśaiva theory and practice and have given it a definite shape. But, as stated already, Śaraṇas or Vīraśaiva saints of 12th century headed by Basavaṇṇa have given expression to their divine experience based on Vīraśaivism. The vacana literature, apart from being a unique form of mystic literature, has come to be regarded as the living authority of Vīraśaive School. Taking all these works into consideration a few observations may be made regarding its philosophical approach.

It holds Śiva as supreme reality who creates the world through the power inseparably inherent in Him. It is the primordial power called cicchakti which undertakes the work of creation manifesting itself spontaneously, but at the same time without isolating itself from Śiva. Śiva pervades the entire world created by his Śakti, yet he transcends it. The evolution of the world has also been discussed here. It holds the opinion, as Tamiḷ Śaiva Siddhānta does, that the world is created with thirtysix tattvas or categories (or basic elements) as against twentyfive tattvas of Sāṅkhya philosophy. The conception of these tattvas is quite different from that of the

elements of Buddhism. Unlike Śaṅkara's Advaita, which holds that the world is unreal (Māyā) Vīraśaivism emphasises that the world is a reality, but it is not something that was created on a particular day. It is without beginning (anādi) and without end (ananta), Śiva throws it out and again withdraws it into Himself. It evolves from Him and involves into Him. This is an eternal play of Śiva, as it were.

Generally all schools of Hindu religion have accepted in some form or the other, the triple entity *i.e.*, puruṣa, parabrahma, and prakṛti. In Śaiva terms they are called paśu (jīva), pati (Śiva), and pāśa (bond, or the world). To these three Vīraśaivism has added one more entity, Śakti (Power). In all the three entities mentioned above, Śakti inseparably inheres at various levels. Jīva is imbued with Śakti *i.e.*, Śaktiviśiṣṭa jīva, so also Śaktiviśiṣṭa Śiva, both unite to make an inseparable whole. Jīva becomes Śiva Himself. In this respect, it is Advaita (non-duality) but it is qualified with Śakti. So this system is also termed as "Śakti Viśiṣṭādvaita Siddhānta." It does not accept the view that jīvas are different from Śiva. Jīva (Ātman) is one of the eight bodies (aṣṭa tanu) of Śiva. This is known in Vīraśaiva terminology as Aṅga. Śiva is called Liṅga. The conception of Liṅga as a mode of worship will be seen later on when the religious aspect is dealt with. Here it may be stated that under the sway of avidya (ignorance) and triple impurities (Malatraya) Aṅga forgets its innate nature. So jīvas are basically pure for they have come from Śiva Himself. It is to regain that original purity, which is technically known as Liṅgāṅga Sāmarasya (Union of Liṅga and Aṅga) that all jīvas strive — says Vīraśaivism.

This ultimate end is indicated in Buddhism by the term Nirvāṇa. The conception of Nirvāṇa seems to have evolved gradually and reached its fullness in Mādhyamika School of Buddhism. This school is also known as Śūnyavāda. The advocates of this school hold that there is nothing real in the world; that is to say there is nothing in its own or innate form ((Sva-rūpa). All things appear to us in their imposed form (ārōpita) and not in their own form. Nāgārjuna, the greatest teacher of this school says: "There is neither

being nor cessation of it, there is neither bondage nor escape from it." So it is known as the doctrine of the Void or Śūnya Vāda.

But Śūnya is not to be taken in the sense of Nothingness or Non-entity. Correctly understood it is not annihilation but it is "the negation of negation." Void here means, avoiding all imaginary qualities which we super-imposed on reality *i.e.*, "it is the conscious correction of an initial unconscious falsification of the real." Taken in this sense, it seems that the absolute is very aptly termd as Śūnya, or Void. It is void of duality *i.e.*, complete non-duality prevails here. In this context, it is said that Śūnya Vāda has exerted influence on Śaṅkara in formulating his theory of Advaita. We need not go to that point here. But it must be remembered that Śūnya Vāda is the doctrine of independent origins according to which, there is neither cessation nor production (birth), neither impermanence nor permanence, neither difference nor identity and which calms activity."

The experience of this "Śūnyatā" is called Nirvāṇa. It is the highest stage which human experience can reach. Though it cannot be expressed in words, it is real. Based on the two diametrically opposed solutions namely: the absolute end is either eternal death or it is eternal life, different conceptions of Nirvāṇa in different schools of Buddhism have been formulated. But without going to those details its general nature may be mentioned in a word or two. It is the result of complete change of all mental processes. It is the understanding of oneself by oneself. This is possible only through annihilation of desires *i.e.*, tr̥ṣṇa or tanha. It is the extinction of all elements of life. A distinction is made between two kinds of Nirvāṇa "Upādhiśeṣa Nirvāṇa" and "Nirupādhiśeṣa Nirvāṇa" (or pari Nirvāṇa). The former is the total cessation of Ignorance and of the passions though the body and the mind continue to function. This corresponds to Jīvanmukti of Vedānta. Pari Nirvāṇa is the final release where all elements, which constitute the empirical existence have completely ceased. Nirvāṇa, in short, is the transcendent life of the spirit.

Vīraśaiva Śaraṇās also use the term Śūnya and sometimes Nirvāṇa also, but their conception of them is quite different.

Buddhistic Śūnya ultimately ended in annihilation inspite of all the pains taken to refute its negative approach. Its ingenious interpretations like "it is the negation of negation" finally ended in negation itself. But Śaraṇas' approach is brilliantly positive. It is an edifice built on the foundation of Upaniṣadic philosophy. It starts with Nēti, Nēti (not this, not this), but it does not end there alone. It comes to a point where we can positively say iti, (this is). This Śūnya is a comprehensive conception, which includes the whole universe in its entirety. It is an all-pervasive and all-inclusive principle. The first stage of the evolution of this universe is significantly called Śūnya Liṅga by Śaraṇas. So ultimately that amorphous conception of Śiva who is the first cause of the universe has come to be regarded as Śūnya.

Śaraṇas use another significant word Bayalu. Sometimes it is used synonymous with Śūnya, but often it denotes perfect communion of jīva with Śiva or Aṅga with Liṅga. When Aṅga unites with Liṅga (Śūnya) it loses its individuality and is completely merged in the ocean of Liṅga. The final release is termed as Bayalu. It is a Kannaḍa word which means Ākāśa or space but Śaraṇas have made it a very significant term pregnant with spiritually suggestive meaning. Number of Vacanas, especially the vacanas of Allama Prabhu, who may easily be ranked as one of the greatest mystics of the world, have expressed the comprehensive conception of Śūnya or Bayalu. This is not the place for the detailed exposition of that sublime principle as revealed in the vacanas.

Now we can turn our attention to the religious aspect *i.e.*, the spiritual path laid down by the two religions. Buddha in the course of his spiritual pursuit became convinced of the four noble truths (Ārya Satyāni). They are:

1. there is suffering (dukha) in the world
2. it has a cause (samudaya)
3. it can be suppressed (nirōdha)
4. there is a way to accomplish it (mārga).

Buddha, the compassionate, looked upon life filled with suffering as a disease and naturally he turned to be a great Healer. He played

the part of a successful doctor who found out the root cause of the disease. In the ever changing world where there is no stability for things, ignorance (avidya) causes suffering. The theory of the origin of suffering has been elaborately described. It gives a very dark picture of the world. As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan puts it in his "Indian Philosophy": "There is a tendency in Buddhism to blacken what is dark, and darken what is grey." But Buddha did not leave it at that. He struggled hard to find a way out.

He accepted Karma theory also. But it is not the Karma theory of either Hinduism which holds the view that the allotment of pain or pleasure according to one's past action is in the hands of divine power, or of Jainism where Karma is taken to be subtle matter (Pudgala) adhering to soul and pulling it down from its spiritual flight. His conception of Karma is an impersonal law in the sphere of morality. It works according to its own nature and by itself. With this view of Karma in the background, he tried to abolish the religion of the popular type which helplessly looked to a divine power with craven fear. He established a religion where trust in righteousness predominated. We find that all his teachings and moral codes are ultimately based on this idea.

The significance of his teaching rests mainly on his ethical approach. He realised the importance of moral conduct in life. Morality according to him, was not for its own sake. It was a means to him to achieve the end namely, internal happiness. If 'hate' is bad, it is so because it disturbs the mind and causes misery; so it is to be avoided. This applies to every moral situation.

In his ethical principle Buddha avoided extremes of self indulgence and self-mortification. He said in his first celebrated sermon at Benares: "There are two extremes, O monks, from which he who leads a religious life must abstain. What are those two extremes? One is a life of pleasure, devoted to desire and enjoyment: that is bare, ignoble, unspiritual, unworthy and unreal. The other is a life of mortification; it is gloomy, unworthy, unreal. The perfect one, O monks, is removed from both these extremes and has discovered the way which lies between them, the middle way which enlightens

the eyes, enlightens the mind, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvāṇa."

The middle path enunciated by Buddha is the eight fold path; right faith, right resolve, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right thought, right concentration. Here right faith (belief) takes the first place, because Buddha gave much importance to clear and definite knowledge about the fact of suffering in life. If our belief and faith are wrong, then our acts also become wrong. So right faith is the first step in the spiritual path. Right resolve (or aspiration) comes as a product of right faith. The aspiration here is to renounce the world, not to injure or hurt any life whatsoever. The aspirant must resolve to suffer himself for the sake of others.

Right speech and right action come next. To abstain from falsehood, to abstain from backbiting, to abstain from harsh language and to abstain from frivolous talk is called right speech. Unselfish action is the right action. Buddha never believed in or encouraged religious ceremonies, rituals and sacrifices. "Better homage to a man grounded in dharma than to Agni for a hundred years" he says. And also, "If thou speakest not false, if thou killest not life, if thou takest not what is given thee secure in self-denial — what would'st thou gain by going to Gaya? Any water is Gaya to thee," are his words. He was opposed to blind belief and reliance only on any scriptural authority, without discrimination. He warned his pupils not to follow his teachings also blindly. "You must be a light unto thyself" (Ātma dīpa) — so he said. Again "Neither abstinence nor going naked, nor shaving the head, nor a rough garment, neither offering to priests nor sacrifice to God will cleanse a man who is not free from delusion" in such words as these we clearly see that the internal purity is everything to Buddha. Śīla, or character, has also acquired an important place in right action. All these principles have been very finely expressed and enunciated by Vīraśaivism also in the vacanas of the Śaraṇas.

Thus right action leads to right living. It is abstinence from being a burden to others; and also living without exploitation of others. In the first five principles, it may be noted that the stress is

on conduct. But in the last three, namely, right effort, right thought and right concentration, we find that the stress is on subjective purification which is needed for the removal of the causes of sorrow.

Right effort is an effort to control passions and to prevent the rise of bad qualities. Here Buddha analyses the mind beautifully and prescribes five methods to expel the undesirable ideas from it. Without the right effort, anger, envy, pride and attachment etc., cannot be destroyed. Unless they are destroyed there can be no enlightenment. Hence the importance of right effort. But this cannot be isolated from right thought, which consists in having a complete control over the mind. Mind is everything to Buddha. "On the mind depends dharma. On the practice of dharma enlightenment" — he declared. Mental control is not a suppression of the senses but it is a cultivation of them. There are certain aspects of this cultivation such as prajña or insight, dhyāna or meditation etc. This proceeds to the last *i.e.*, right concentration. Four states of Dhyāna are prescribed to heighten the powers of the mind. Mind is concentrated and strengthened by certain exercises which correspond to Yogic practices. Through these, mind finally reaches a stage where the dualities of pleasure and pain are lost and where purity, awareness, and equanimity reign supreme. This leads to Nirvāṇa, Upādhiśeṣa in the first stage, and Pari Nirvāṇa in the final stage. This, in brief, is the spiritual path of Buddhism consisting of eight steps.

Spiritual path laid down by Vīraśaivism consists of Ṣaṭ-sthala. If this religion is known as "Śakti Viśiṣṭādvaita" on account of its philosophic aspect, it is known from religious point of view as "Ṣaṭ-sthala" Siddhānta. 'Sthala' is a Sanskrit word which means 'place', 'ground' etc., but in Vīraśaivism it is technically used sometimes to mean Brahman, the absolute which it calls Liṅga. But when it is commonly used, it means a stage, a step, or a halting place. It is in this sense that the word is used in Ṣaṭ-Sthala Siddānta (system of six stages). Spiritual life of an aspirant has to be evolved in six stages namely: Bhakta-Sthala, Mahēśa-Sthala, Prasādi-Sthala,

Prāṇaliṅgi-Sthala, Śaraṇa-Sthala and Aikya-Sthala. The elaborate discussions of these Sthalas; divisions of 'Aṅga Sthala' and 'Liṅga Sthala' and their sub-divisions and arrangements have been very minutely worked out. Without going into those details here we may look at it in a broad outline.

At the very outset, it is very interesting to note a remarkable similarity, of course, upto a certain point, between the eightfold path of Buddhism and the sixfold path of Vīraśaivism. Like Buddhism, Vīraśaivism also lays great stress on the ethical aspect of religion, but its moral approach is quite different.

It is a system which accepts in clear terms, unlike Buddhism, a supreme Godhead, as the creator and the redeemer of the universe and so all religious aspects revolve round that supreme principle. Bhakti or devotion becomes the basis of all moral life. Hence, it considers Bhakta-Sthala as the first step in the pilgrim's progress. The investigation into this variegated world and also into man's perpetual struggle for life therein, leads any thinking mind into wonder at the marvellous power of Śiva. In any attempt to understand the real nature of the world and final goal of life one is forced at some stage to surrender himself to some supreme power. This is the first step, as it were, in the ascending path of the soul. This is known as Bhakta-Sthala. With firm belief in Śiva, the seeker, through Guru's grace, enters into a new life. The Guru initiates him by giving Iṣṭa-Liṅga, the significant symbol of Śiva, to be worshipped by him.

Before we proceed, the conception of Iṣṭa-Liṅga which is the unique feature of Vīraśaivism may, briefly, be stated. In a word, it is an amorphous conception of God. Worship of Śiva in the form of popular Liṅga in temples is itself suggestive, but wearing this always on the body in the form of Iṣṭa Liṅga is highly significant. Iṣṭa-Liṅga is not a miniature 'Sthāvara Liṅga' that is found in Śaiva temples. The shape of 'Iṣṭa-Liṅga' is admirably conceived. It consists of two parts. Small Liṅga *i.e.*, Sthāvara Liṅga in miniature form, forms the inner part, over which is a black outer cover technically called 'Kanthe'. It is shining like a mirror and oval in

shape, the size being roughly that of a lemon. The outer cover symbolises the macrocosm and the inner kernel, the miniature Liṅga, represents microcosm. At the time of worship, the black shining thing (Iṣta-Liṅga) is put on the left palm of the worshipper and it is worshipped, himself being the microcosm and the outer world being macrocosm like the 'Kanthe' of the Iṣta Liṅga. At the end of worship, he concentrates his attention on the Liṅga. This is called Dṛṣti Yoga or Trāṭaka yoga which finally leads to Śiva Yoga. Method of worship which is evolved in Ṣaṭ-Sthala Siddānta clearly shows the comprehensive and convincing view of the synthesis of Brahmāṇḍa (Macrocosm) and Piṇḍāṇḍa (Microcosm), Jīva and Śiva; Karma and Jñāna.

Bhakta-Sthala is the starting point of the great spiritual journey. When once Bhakti (devotion) enters, the whole outlook and the purpose of life is changed. Bhakta lives in this world as before but he surrenders himself to Śiva and becomes an instrument in the hands of the supreme power which pervades his entire body and manifests itself as Iṣta-liṅga. Here we find a living enterprise of utilising Bhakti for the perfect unfoldment of personality.

The next step is Mahēśvara-Sthala, where constant effort through a single pointed zeal is advocated. If right belief is predominant in Bhakta-Sthala, invincible stability and resolve to right action and right speech are found in Mahēśvara-Sthala. He never invites anything nor does he reject anything. He faces things as they come, and moulds the situation in such a way as to suit his purpose. His lofty ethical life is elaborately described here. Most of the ethical principles which are found in the eight fold path of Buddha are found to be advocated in Bhakta and Mahēśa Sthalas, in the form of Ācāras and Śīlas, but with this difference that the moral life of Vīraśaivism is not based on asceticism. To be born in this world is not a sin, nor is life a bundle of miseries. Essentially the creation is Ānanda (Bliss) of Śiva, and life is a part and parcel of that Ānanda. There is nothing to be rejected in this world. Everything is his Prasāda or gracious gift. But we must know how to adjust it to to our lives. This leads to the third stage Prasādi-sthala.

Śaraṇas have used the word *prasāda* in a very wide sense. It has mainly two facets namely: the world itself is Śiva's prasāda or gift is one; the other as in the words of Dēvara Dāsimayya, 'If I hug thee in a warm embrace, that itself is a real prasāda.' Thus in the Prasādi-sthala, the seeker himself becomes the great prasāda of Śiva. This is possible only when divine grace descends. It comes through the triple aspect, Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama. This helps him to perform action without any desire for reward *i.e.*, Niṣkāma Karma. This annihilates the seeker's sense of ego and assists him to win 'Manaḥ prasāda' (Prasāda of the mind) where all pains and miseries disappear. Thus Prasādi-Sthala accomplishes what is said in Gītā "Prasāde sarva dukhānām hānirasyopa jāyate" —*i.e.*, in that peace and tranquillity all pains are destroyed.

In Prasādi-sthala the seeker himself becomes the great prasada to Śiva, whereas in the Prānaliṅgi-Sthala the non-differentiating outlook develops *i.e.*, prasādi (seeker himself) becomes the embodiment of Śiva. From this stage onwards, it may be observed that Jñāna (knowledge) takes the upperhand. The searching eye of prasādi that looks upwards for Śiva's grace, here in prāṇaliṅgi turns within and finds it within himself. Here Jīva is approaching nearer Śiva, it is gradually developing the idea of identifying Śiva within himself. The psychic force that abides in his body is itself prāṇaliṅga which has crystallized into Iṣṭaliṅga and come to his palm. So meditation upon Iṣṭaliṅga must lead to that upon Prāṇaliṅga. Here Yogic practices with Iṣṭaliṅga as centre (*i.e.*, Śiva Yoga) are prescribed.

The next stage is Śaraṇa-Sthala. Śaraṇa, in one sense, is one who has completely surrendered himself to Śiva. This, of course, is the first step towards any spiritual pursuit, and it is found all pervasive from Bhakta-Sthala upto Aikya-Sthala. Thus it comes to be regarded as a general name to all Vīraśaiva Saints. But here the concept of Śaraṇa is understood in a higher sense. He who has lost his narrow individuality and who knows and experiences that himself and Śiva are essentially the same — is a Śaraṇa. He is merged in the endless ocean of Śivānanda (Bliss of Śiva) but it must be

remembered that the individual is not completely lost in it. He comes out having a bit of that bliss and shares it with the world. He desires to distribute the fruits of joy to society. Here lies the greatness of a Śaraṇa. It is not enough if the seeker aims at his own liberation; he must also become the source of social good. So Śaraṇa after having attained his goal, works for the Society; besides another important thing to be noted is, it is through work for the Society that he attains his goal. Both become complement to one another. Śaraṇa, it may be said, corresponds to Jīvan-mukta state; and in a way it may be compared to Upādhiśeṣa Nirvāṇa of Buddhism.

Next and last stage is Aikya. Here is a complete and unqualified identity of Śiva and Jīva. The direct vision of the truth now becomes a normal state. He turns out into Itself. This is what Śaraṇas call Anubhāva or intuitive perception of God. Finally it transcends the stage of apprehension of it also. Here Aṅga and Liṅga become absolutely one perfect whole. Śaraṇas are not only very explicit in asserting the unity but also declare in clear and vivid terms the identity which they have experienced. They call it Bayalu and sometimes Nirvāṇa also. But it is not the Nirvāṇa of the Buddhists as we have already seen.

This in brief is Ṣat-Sthala Mārga. From Bhakta to Aikya all the possible stages of development are very significantly depicted here. It is very interesting to study this against a psychological background. This forms a special subject for study which is not intended here. It suffices here to observe that Ṣaṭ-Sthala Siddhānta synthesises all schools of thought, whether Hindu or non-Hindu, which care for any spiritual progress at all. It is Dvaita, Advaita, Viśiṣṭādwaita; it is Jñāna, Karma, Bhakti brought together. If we find Dvaita in Bhakta stage, we find complete Advaita in Aikya stage. First three stages of Ṣaṭ-sthala *i.e.*, Bhakta, Mahēśa and Prasādi, may be called Kriyātmaka (action predominated); the last three, Praṇaliṅgi, Śaraṇa, Aikya — may be called Jñānātmaka (Knowledge predominated). And Bhakti (devotion) pervades and develops through all the stages. So it is a perfect synthesis of Bhakti,

Jñāna and Karma. There are some of the ritual aspects of Ṣaṭ-sthala, such as Pancācāra (five Ācaras) and Aṣṭāvaraṇa (eight shields) to help the seeker to tread the path. We need not go into those details here. In a word, it may be said that Ṣaṭ-Sthala Siddhānta is a very comprehensive spiritual path which deserves special study.

Besides the philosophical and religious aspects, there is another aspect of religion which is the social aspect. After all religion, in addition to being a mode of individual self-realisation, has its impact on social life and has as its purpose the establishment and promotion of social harmony or harmony of the group. It must tend to sweeten human relationship. The fact that each religion has developed according to the social needs of the day is very well exemplified in Buddhism and Vīraśaivism. Both, predominantly rational and moral religions, came to be developed under similar circumstances. So they worked almost on the same lines socially. They fought against social injustice, inequality, meaningless rituals and priestcraft. Untouchability had to be removed. Social evils which had crept into the body politic in the name of religion had to be eradicated. For this a new social dynamic became necessary. This was provided by Buddhism and Vīraśaivism. They provided equal opportunities to all without discrimination of caste, creed or sex. Women were given equal rights in religious practices. The emancipation of women was one of the important features of these religions. In all these respects, there is a remarkable similarity between the two systems.

Buddha and Basava, both were advocates of humanism and saviours of mankind. Their teachings provided a new religion inspired by deep compassion, reached the hearts of the people and conquered them. The parallel to these we can find in Jesus Christ whose heart melted at every step with pity and compassion for the poor and the miserable. So also Buddha and Basava dedicated their whole life for the uplift of the common people. Both of them placed before the world the idea of "Corporate emancipation" or universal salvation or sarva mukti.

Basava went a step further. He paved the way for that corporate

emancipation, in a very significant way. Basava besides being a prophet, was also a statesman who formulated a theory of self-sufficient society with all-round development of social aspects. The idea of Kāyaka (work) enunciated by Basava was and is a unique contribution to world thought. Buddhism was predominantly ascetic, and its ethical system was more individualistic than social. But Vīraśaiva ethics is a harmonious synthesis of society and the individual. Basava and other Śaraṇas realised the complete idea of an integral life. Theirs is an ideal society which is self-sufficient and that which provides equal opportunities to all. No one has any right to eat without work was its teaching. Gandhi's Śarira Śrama or body-labour is an echo of Kāyaka. Buddhism accepted beggary in the name of religion. But Vīraśaivism never accepted the validity of begging. Even the Guru and the Jaṅgama should work. Every work is as great as any other work, there is nothing like high or low, so long as it makes a constructive impact on the life of society and helps individual progress. Thus when work becomes a selfless means to achieve the end it shall be a Kāyaka and work becomes worship. This, the Śaraṇas actually put into practice in their lives. Śaraṇas of various Kāyakas, right from Basavaṇṇa who was a Minister under Kalacurya King Bijjaḷa to Haraḷayya, a cobbler, sat together in "Anubhava Maṇṭapa" without any distinction, and discussed spiritual problems. This idea of "Dignity of labour" which is not fully accomplished even today was actually put into practice eight hundred years ago by Basavaṇṇa

In such things as these the unique features of Vīraśaivism revived by Basavaṇṇa, are found. Social aspect and achievements of Vīraśaivism make an interesting study to be taken up independently. It suffices here to say that Vīraśaivism is far ahead of Buddhism in respect of its integrated vision composing its religious, ethical and social aspects.

This, in short, is a cursory glance at the two great religions. Though Buddhism, once a predominant religion in India, when it was almost rooted out of its mother country, it took possession of several other countries. Now, it is one of the major religions of the

world. Vīraśaivism, though apparently confined to Karnāṭak and other neighbouring states, it nevertheless forms not only a significant chapter in Indian Culture but it has a message potent enough to illumine the World Culture today.

H. THIPPERUDRASWAMY

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VĪRAŚAIVISM AND JAINISM

A student of Indian Religions notices two salient features. The Vedas are the sacred books for some and the Āgamas[1] form the sacred lore for the others. The religion based on the Vedas is known as "Vaidic" and religion based on Āgamas is styled as "Āgamic." Jainism and Vīraśaivism inherit their ethical codes and principles from the Āgamas. The two words Vaidic and Āgamic bear significant meaning in their respective spheres. Even today the origin of the Āryan has still remained undecided. Whether the Āryans were the indigenous or they came over to India from outside stock is a controversial point. The excavations conducted at Harappa and Mohenjodaro and in many other places both in the North and South India, testify to the fact that there existed a race having its own culture of a high order, and which could stand comparison with that of the Āryans. In the sphere of religions of these races the question of their existence needs no consideration. The fact that these two races lived side by side mutually partaking each other's beneficial cultural aspects is beyond doubt. As it is not possible to deal with all aspects of these two religions in one article, I have tried to enumerate the bare philosophical outlines only.

Jaina or Śramaṇa tradition has a long history. Of the twentyfour Tīrthaṅkaras, the last two *viz.*, Pārśvanātha and

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1 According to Jainism, Āgamas mean the sacred books in which the preachings of the Tīrthaṅkaras are reduced to writing by the Jaina Ācāryas from time to time.

Vardhamāna Mahāvīra were not legendary figures. Their origin is traceable in history. In the 6th century B.C. most of the enlightened countries like Greece, India etc., were advancing towards new metaphysical outlook. It was the period of revolutionary ideas. At that time the Vedic ceremonial rites were scrupulously followed in India. The people were disgusted with the sacrificial rites and the slaughter of animals. It was then, that people heard the message that "Nonviolence or live and let live" was the crux of religion and it was the voice of Vardhamāna Mahāvīra who started preaching a new tenet that non-violence was the essence of the new religion *i.e.*, Jainism. It is a known fact that Pārśvanātha lived two hundred and fifty years before Mahāvīra was born. The research study conducted recently has proved that the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras like Ādinātha and Ajitanātha lived in India. There are copious references about this fact in the Vedas and Purāṇas.[2] These evidences prove that Jainism with its regular followers existed in India from ancient times. Here it would be imperative to know the outlines of Jaina Philosophy. The Jaina Philosophy has a logic of its own. Jainas believed and confirmed their views only after a crucial test. In other words it can be said that Jaina Philosophy is based on scientific basis and reasoning.[3] Many philosophical schools other than Jainism have viewed this visible world and been wonderstruck at its various features and manifestations. Consequently their feelings and reverences were intensified towards the creator of such a wonderful universe. They firmly believed that the creator should be a Superman — Omnipotent. Jaina Ācāryas were not satisfied with this mystic view. They tried to probe into the origin of the creator. Who was the creator of the creator? The question had no answer. The question they

2 "The 'Yajurveda' mentions the names of three Tīrthaṅkaras — Rishabha, Ajit and Ariṣṭanēmi. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa endorses the view that Rishabha was the founder of Jainism." Radhakrishnan, Indin Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 287.

3 "Jainism is a science and not a code of arbitrary rules and capricious Commandments. It does not claim to derive its authority from any non-human source, but is science like, founded on the knowledge of those great ones who have attained perfection with its aid." C. R. Jain — "What is Jainism"

faced was really great as compared to the so called answer, if any. The simple logic of cause and effect failed to bring forth the truthful answer. Here the Jainas began to differ with the other Schools with their own reasonings. The Jaina Ācāryas held the view that the universe is eternal and uncreated and it evolves and revolves, within its countless attributes and modifications for ever and that it undergoes even radical, catastrophic changes in space and time.

The contents of the universe like earth, grass, tree, river, man, animal, bird and their metamorphases were subjected to the phenomenal laws of nature which are governed by the six Dravyas—the fundamental substances of which the universe is composed. They did not believe in the illusion of the world—"Brahma satya, Jaganmithya." Its existence they took it for granted. They faced two more questions: (1) when this universe came into existence? (2) when it will be destroyed? But their reply was pithy and straight. The universe existed since the times immemorial or dim past, and it will go on for centuries to come or infinity. But the visible things were categorised into two divisions. One is soul *i.e.*, Jīva and the others are non-soul Ajīva. The characteristic of the soul is conscious attentiveness which is seen in the knowledge of the All-knowing.[4] The non-soul substances are five — *viz.*, Pudgala, Dharma, Adharma, Ākāśa and Kāla.

The soul and matter (non-soul) are two separate subtances. They both act and react upon each other, in the mundane phase of their existence. Every substance is a combination of its own attributes. All its attributes with all its modifications are inherent in that substance. The common attributes of individuality keep each substance separate from all the other substances. One substance can never become another. But they experience mutual and auxiliary actions and interactions.

The Ākāśa — the space — locates the remaining five substances. The Ākāśa has two regions viz., "Lōkākāśa" "Alōkākāśa." That region which locates the remaining five substances is known as the

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4 Samayasāra—I. 26

"Lōkākāśa." In the region above the "Lōkākāśa" the functions, actions and reactions (Saṁsaraṇaṁ) of the mundane phase of the Dravyas is brought to stand still. This region is known as "Alōkākāśa." Just at the top of the Lōkākāśa there exists the Siddha Śila — abode of bliss where the souls detached from all Kārmic matter rest.

The soul in contact with matter exists in four *gatis* (forms) *viz.*, Deva, Manusha, Piryak, and Narak. The soul separated from Kārmic matter will ascend to the Siddha Śila, and from there it will never descend to Lōkākāśa to be contaminated again with matter and start its course anew in the four *gatis*. Thus the Jīva dissociating itself once for all from the Kārmic matter becomes Paramātma or God. The characteristics of the soul in this state are perfect knowledge *i.e.*, capacity to know all that is knowable, perfect conation, perfect bliss and omnipotence.

Kāla gives duration, newness, oldness, continuity, change and permanence. Dharma helps the movements of soul and matter. Adharma the cessation of movements. Pudgala is the matter which, when broken, is reduced to a minutest particle. It is never stationary. (Puryatī and galayatitī pudgalaḥ). It constantly integrates and disintegrates. Mighty matter invests the potentiality of the almighty soul with the "Kāmaṇa, Taijasa, Āhāraka, Vaikiyaka and Audarika" bodies with indriyas (senses) and thus makes the soul act the comedy and tragedy of endless cycles of earthly existence. The almighty soul itself possesses the attribute of knowability (jñāna) and thereby masters all other substances by His knowledge.

The seven principles (Sapta tattva) are Jīva, Ajīva, Asrava, Bandha, Sanvara, Nirjara and Mokṣa. Jīva Ajīva have already been explained in the foregoing paragraphs.

The great Saṁsāra is really a drama of two principal actors — Soul and Matter. Matter is an auxiliary cause of producing impure thought activity of attachment, hatred, pain, pleasure etc., while Saṁsāri Jīvas' thought activities through their senses become causes of modification of matter (Pudgala) into Kārmic bondage. This is "Bandha." Freedom from this Kārmic bondage is "Mokṣa." This

is the ultimate goal of Saṁsāri Jīva and is only attainable by the threefold path of Right belief, Right knowledge, and Right conduct.[5] Right belief in the principles of Jīva and Ajīva etc., and Right knowledge of these principles and Right conduct *i.e.*, pursuit of such conduct by which one dissociates himself from the thought activities of bondage which results in the freedom of the Soul from the Karma. Inflow of Karma is called Asrava, stopping the inflow of new Karma is Sanvar and dissociating the already bound Karma is Nirjara.

Finally, the destruction of Karmas takes place only in those Saints who entirely depend upon the highest object (Paramārtha)[6] and Right knowledge of the Dravyas (Substances) and Tattwas *i.e.*, principles and laws which govern them. This, in short, is the philosophy of cosmology of Jainism and its Karma Theory.

Jainism teaches people living in this atomic age that it is logical and based on scientific basis. However, the principles of philosophy and religion have remained beyond the comprehension of common man. But Jainism offers a threadbare analysis intelligible to the common man. Mere mentioning of "Caturdaśa Guṇasthāna," "Ratnatraya," "Daśa Dharma" etc., will kindle the fire of curiosity towards religion. Even then the correct understanding of thoughts and ideas propagated by the Jain Ācāryas has become difficult on account of lack of interest and indifference. The common man with false notions has not become free from the influence of "Karma Kāṇḍa." This is a problem for Jainism too. Even the ardent Jains making efforts to know and follow the tenets of Jainism have not entirely dissociated themselves from observing some of the rites and ceremonies of Vaidic Karma Kāṇḍa. With full regard to the mighty influence of the Karma Prakṛti through its senses on the mundane soul (Saṁsāri Jīva) and the human weaknesses and failings, the Jain Ācāryas have tried to lead the humanity towards ultimate

5 Samyagdarśana, jñānaṁ cāritrāṇī mōkṣamārgaḥ (tattvārtha sūtra). This principle is well illustrated by the great Jain Ācārya, Śrī Kunda Kunda, in his 'Samaya Sāra' also—V. 162

6 Ibid.—V. 163

goal and freedom of the soul from the bondage, starting right from prescribing "Anuvritas"[7] *i.e.* simple disciplined and controlled conduct and behaviour. Thus the Jain Ācāryas have led the erring humanity to truth by explaining the fundamental principles both from the point of view of "Vyavahar" and "Niscya." Here lies the greatness of Jain Ācāryas.

Now let me deal with Vīraśaivism[8] in brief. Vīraśaivism is based on Āgamic tradition. It came into force by the 12th century A.D. Śaivism was prior to this religion. Śaivism was one of the oldest religions of India. There are tangible proofs to show that the Śaivism held sway in India, right from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Gujarat to Bengal. Śaivism had many sects like Kāḷāmukha, Kāpālika, Kashmir Śaivism, Vaṅga and Śaivism in South. There were differences, no doubt, but they were merely qualitative. By the 12th century A.D. followers of these different sects were living in Karnāṭak. The muslim onslaught might be a reason for their coming over to this place. These sects, settled in Karnāṭak, were competing with one another for supremacy. But the people at large were in a peculier mood whether to believe or disbelieve a particular sect. Fortunately, Śrī Basavēśvara came on the scene and founded a new religion by taking up all that was good in these various sects. This new religion was termed as Vīraśaivism.

According to Vīraśaivism there is an original and supreme divine power synonymous with Śūnya. This supreme divine power takes to action, resulting in the creation of this universe. Even though Vīraśaivism and Jainism are based on Āgamic tradition the former firmly believes in the Creator, while the latter does not. The soul, a particle in the supreme divinity, according to Vīraśaiva philosophy, commences its journey in the world and ultimately returns and mingles with the supreme power. The followers of Śaiva

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7 ahiṁsā, satya, astēya, brahmacrya, aparigraha

8 Please refer to, for detailed study —

(1) "Ṣaṭsthala Prabhe" — Dr. R. C. Hiremath, M.A. Ph.D.

(2) A Handbook of Vīraśaivism — Dr. S. C. Nandimath, M.A., Ph.D.

cult worshipped Lord Śiva. The Vīraśaivas also worshipped Śiva. But Vīraśaivism differed from Śaivism proper which believes in the shape of God. On the contrary Vīraśaivism believes in God with no form or shape, synonymous with the supreme or divine power. In the progress of this supreme or divinity there are three different stages like Bhāvaliṅga, Prāṇaliṅga and Iṣṭaliṅga in the first instance and later on six stages like Mahāliṅga, Prasādaliṅga, Jaṅgamaliṅga, Śivaliṅga, Guruliṅga and Ācāraliṅga have been marked out. Six symbols or liṅgas carved out six Aṅgas with the help of six-fold Śakti and rest in the Aṅgas. The process of God taking the form of six liṅgas first and six aṅgas afterwards is known as 'Pravṛtti.'

In a similar way there are six Aṅgasthalas like Aikya, Śaraṇa, Prāṇaliṅgȧ, Prasāda, Mahēśvara and Bhakta. The process of union of these Aṅgas with Liṅga is described as Nivṛtti. With the help of six-fold devotion, these Aṅgas unite with the Liṅga. The Aṅga taking birth from Liṅga becomes Liṅga again but through the path of devotion. This process is termed as "Ṣaṭsthala" or six-fold philosophy. In Vīraśaivism there are eight aids to faith (Aṣṭāvaraṇa), namely, Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Pādōdaka, Prasāda, Vibhūti, Rudrākṣi, and Mantra. The Vīraśaiva philosophy, it appears, has made use of other systems of Indian philosophy. It can be described thus:

The followers of Dvaita or dualist philosophy hold themselves as the eternal servants of Lord, fit to live by the side of his lotus like feet. The followers of Advaita or Monistic Philosophy call themselves as the Lord in miniature, ultimately mingling with the supreme. If the former seeks the Lord from a pretty long distance, the latter takes the liberty in identifying oneself with Almighty. There was an unbridged gap. The nearness to God was left out in one religion. The second religion instead of advising its followers to bow down before the God, prompts them to be free and take to action. Viśiṣṭtādvaita believes in the supremecy of only one God. But the Śaraṇas showed the different and straight path to Salvation. Their view was that the person (irrespective of sex) was the part and parcel of the God. This part and parcel came forth as Aṅga, through the

power or Śakti and again mingles with Liṅga through devotion. In short it was a long way journey of descending and ascending. To seek salvation or the eternal bliss the person or Aṅga need not cut off the relations of silken bond, become a recluse, in the robes of saffron or 'Sanyasa' as in case of Jainism. Instead, his every action was dictated to him by the Lord and everything that he took or accepted was on account of the pleasure of the Lord and that he can freely mingle with Him in the present birth, formed the sum-total of the sound advice of Śaraṇas. In this sermon, the relationship of the servant and Master, and the identification of oneself with the Lord were explained. Thus we find it was a synthesis of Dvaita and Advaita Philosophy. The supreme power transforms to Aṅga (form) and Aṅga transforms to Liṅga. This system of philosophy is termed as Śakti Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. Thus the seed of devotion towards God was sown as well as the desire to reach the goal of life *i.e.*, salvation. The people at large were inclined towards this philosophy.

B. S. KULKARNI

SECTION : FIVE

If you should speak, your words should be
Pearls that are strung upon a thread.

If you should speak, your words should be
Like lustre by the ruby shed.

If you should speak, your words should be
A crystal's flash that cleaves the blue.

If you should speak, great God must say
Ay, ay, that's very true!

But if your deed betrays your word,
*Can Kuḍala Saṅgama care for you?**

BASAVĒŚVARA IN SANSKRIT LITERATURE

Basavēśvara's life and work are depicted in Sanskrit as in Kannaḍa and Telugu. There are two books bearing the name of the Basava Purāṇa or its equivalent Vṛṣabha Purāṇa. In addition to these and based on these a brief life of Śrī Basavēśvara is found in the Śivatattva-Ratnākara of Keḷadi Basavarāja. There is mention also of a book in Sanskrit called Nandyāgama but it is not available. Perhaps it deals with the life of Śrī Basavēśvara believed to be the incarnation of Nandi. Much material in Sanskrit referring to the life and work of Śrī Basavēśvara is yet to be discovered. If the vast manuscript material available even today in the Vīraśaiva Maṭhas is ransacked, more books in Sanskrit may be discovered and much valuable material may come to light.

The above books available will help us to give an idea of how Śrī Basavēśvara was looked upon by the authors and generally the śivabhaktas of those days. Of these the first is the Basava Purāṇa or Vṛṣabheśvara Purāṇa of Śaṅkarārādhya of Kāñchi, the modern Canjivaram in Madras State. It is a big book consisting of 4,714 verses in various metres divided into 43 chapters. Each chapter begins with 'śruṇutvaṁ Keśavāmātya' and ends with a verse praising Keśavāmātya. The author was undoubtedly well versed in Sanskrit. He must have studied masterpieces in Sanskrit such as the works of Kālidāsa, Māgha, Bhāravi. He narrates the circumstances under which he undertook to compose the book and the place where he wrote and explained the Purāṇa. Once on the occasion of

Vasantotsava of Skanda Someśa of Kandakūra, learned men and devotees of Śiva hailing from different parts assembled in the hall of the temple and initiated discussions on various religious topics including the life and work of various Śivaśaraṇas. The life of Śrī Basavēśvara was available then only in regional (Deśīya) languages, and they felt the necessity of one written in Sanskrit, the common language of India to make it popular in other parts. They referred this topic to the Keśavāmātya, chief-minister of King Kumāra Mācha of Kandakūra Reddi family. The minister informed the learned assembly that their object could be fulfilled as he had at hand a learned man, Śaṅkarārādhya of Kāñchi who on his way to visit holy places was staying with the minister. Śaṅkarārādhya was invited and was assigned the work of composing the Purāṇa. He wrote it under the patronage of the minister, Keśavāmātya and perhaps read it in the sabhāmaṇṭapa of the temple where the minister listened to it with attention and devotion. Śaṅkarārādhya considers himself very lucky as the minister himself was very eager to hear the stories of Śivabhaktas (śivabhaktakathākāvya śravaṇotsuka).

In the beginning of the 1st chapter he offers his obeisance to Śiva, Mañcaṇa-Paṇḍita, Śrīpati-Paṇḍita, Śrī Mallikārjuna-Paṇḍita, Kinnara Brahmayya, Ēlēśvara Kētayya, Haradattācārya and Bibbi Bācayya. He then describes Śrīśaila parvata, the deity Śrī Mallikārjuna, Bhramarāṁbā, Skanda-Someśa, Skandapura, etc., and glorifies the family of the ruler King Kumāra Mācha and of his patron Keśavāmātya.

It may be interesting to know the history of the Kandakūra Reddi family. It will also help us to understand the influence of the teachings of Śrī Basaveśvara and Śivaśaraṇas in the ruling families and public of Āndhradēśa at that time and the extent of their leaning and patronage to Śaivism. The Kākatīyas who ruled almost the whole of Āndhradēśa during the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. claim their descent from Karikāla Cōḷa, well-known as a great devotee of Śiva in the Śaiva mythology. Then naturally they adopted Śaivism as their religion. We know that Rudra, Gaṇapati, Rudrāṁba and Pratāpa Rudra patronised and encouraged Śaivism. The

Malkāpuram inscription states clearly the high esteem of the royal family towards Viśveśvara Śambhu of Golakimatha. After the fall of the Kākatiya rule the Nāyakas of the Kingdom formed a confederation to oppose the Mohemmadan rule under the leadership of Prolaya nāyaka and his brother Kāpaya nāyaka. Prolaya Vēma Reddi, the founder of the Kandakūra Reddi family, was one of the leading personages of the confederacy. He, assisted by his brother Mallayya, fought against the Bahamanis and drove them out and rescued the territory, from eastern sea to Śrīśaila. He made Kandakūra Reddi family strong and powerful in the Āndhradēśa. He was a devotee of Śrīśaila Mallikārjuna and constructed steps to Śrīśaila to enable the pilgrims to reach Mallikārjuna temple and from the temple to Pātāḷagaṅgā in Śaka 1265 *i.e.*, 1343 A. D. He made grants to Viśvanātha, a Virakta Śaivācārya and Polidēvayya, a disciple of Mallikārjuna Śānta Bhikṣāvarti. In his inscriptions found in large numbers in Telugu language he is described as Agastya to Mleccha ocean (Mlechābdhi kuṁbhodbhava).

His titles are: the sole master of the world (jaganobha-gaṇḍa), the protector of the cow earth (jagatagopāla), the sun to Pallava family (Pallavāditya), Śiva to Pallavas (Pallava-trinetra), a hero to his enemies (vairi-Vīra), Basava-Śaṅkara, the founder and director of Dharma (Dharma-pratiṣṭhā-guru) and Paraśurāma in granting lands (Nissīmabhū-dāna-Paraśurāma) etc. His descendant Komati II whose inscriptions are dated Śaka 1326 - 1330 had four sons *viz.*, Sōmēśa, Śivaliṅga, Māca and Śrīgiri. Śivaliṅga was a Sanskrit poet and scholar. He wrote a commentary on Giriśa-sṛti-sūktamāle. His brother Māca was ruling when the Basava-Purāṇa was written by Kāñci Śaṅkarārādhya under the patronage of his minister Keśava, the descendant of Vijñāneśvara, the author of a commentary called Mitākṣara on Yājñavalkya Smṛti. From the description in the Basava-Purāṇa it is seen that the Brahmin minister Keśava took keen interest in the preaching of Śrī Basavēśvara and his associates, Śivaśaraṇas.

The minister Keśava belonged to a highly learned family of administrators who held the post of ministers under Reddi kings.

The great grandfather was Mallayya mantri. His son was Śrī Rāma and his son was Allayya who was the father of Kesavāmātya, and mother Lakkamma. He is described in this Purāṇa as well versed in Vedas, Vedāṅgas, Śāstras and music (saṅgītaśāstra). In nītiśāstra he is said to have surpassed Bṛhaspati.

He was invited by Kumāra Māca to hold the post of the chief minister. He is called mantriśekhara, so he must have been very successful in his administration of the kingdom. His respect for Śrī Basavēśvara and Śaraṇas was evident from the following verse.

pūjyapuṇyakathāsaṅgātdeśabhāṣāpidṛśyate
sugandhapuṣpasaṁsargāt sūtraṁ śirasi dhāryate
gīrvāṇavāṇyā grathitāḥ kathā ētā manoharāḥ
jāyante svarṇasūtreṇa syūtā iva maṇisrajaḥ
bhaktināmaṁ samāruhya mukti dvīpaṁ prapitsunā
kavinā kena basavapurāṇabdhistariṣyati
tasmatkaviśca bhataśca bhaktimatsu kṛtādaraḥ
sādhuḥ syātbhaktacāri trapurāṇama karod yadi

The regional language will attain sacredness and high dignity just like a thread of a garland which is worn on the head along with flowers. The Basava purāṇa if written in Sanskrit appears like a garland of jewel put into golden thread. The purāṇa of Basavēśvara is a great ocean. Salvation or liberation forms an island in it. This island can be reached by a ship in the form of devotion (bhakti). So the Basava Purāṇa should be composed by a devotee of Śiva. Śrī Basavēśvara was regarded as second Śiva (dvitīyaśaṁbhu).

The author Śaṅkarārādhya was competent to undertake the work. He has described himself an expert in Sanskrit prose and poetry (gadyapadyātmaka mahākavitātattvakovida) and a great devotee of Ekāmranātha and strict observer of vīramāheśvara discipline (vīramāheśvara parāyaṇa) well-versed in Ṣaṭsthala philosophy (Ṣaṭsthalajñāni) and servant of Śivabhaktas. He appears to be very modest although he was accepted at that time the only competent person to write Basava Purāṇa in kāvya style. The following verses are indicative of his modesty.

alaṅghyo mahadādeśa iti murdhnāmayā dhṛtaḥ
viśruṅkhala manohārī kavitā gauraveṇa na

mārge kavivaravyāpte mahatyācaraṇaṁ mama
bhāsvadācarite vyomni khadyotasyaiva vibhramaḥ
mahākavigirāṁ mārge vācāṁ viharaṇaṁ mama
mṛgendra vikramasthāne sāraṅgasyaiva valgitaṁ
mahākavivacaḥ kṣīramādhuryamuditātmabhiḥ
asmadvākyamapi kvāpi grāhyamāmalakādivat

The second chapter narrates how Śrī Vṛṣabha descended to this world to propagate and spread Śivadharma. Once Nārada visited kailāsa and reported to Śiva that Śivadharma in Karnāṭaka was almost extinct due to the influence of Bauddha and Jaina religions. Śiva ordered Vṛṣabha to take birth in the mortal world and to establish Śivadharma. To fulfil this mission Basava was born as a son to Mādarasa and Mādalāṁbike, a pious Brahmin couple. At the age of eight when the father wanted to perform the intitiation (upanayana) ceremony he refused and left the family and took shelter in the house of an officer who held the post of Pratīhāri. Baladeva who was a minister to king Bijjaḷa and maternal uncle of Śrī Basavēśvara offered his daughter Gaṅgāṁbike and the marriage ceremony was celebrated at Kalyāṇa with great pomp. Śrī Basavēśvara, after the marriage, came to Kūḍala Saṅgama along with his wife, and sister Nāgalāṁbike and lived there for some time. Baladēva expired and the post he held was offered to Śrī Basavēśvara by king Bijjaḷa. Śrī Basavēśvara under instruction from his Guru Saṅgameśa accepted the post. His guru enjoined upon him a strict code of conduct ordering him to eschew other's wife and wealth, to respect the good and virtuous, to refrain from speaking ill of others, to relieve sufferings of mankind and to worship Śiva.

Śrī Basavēśvara followed literally the advice of Guru and in addition, he undertook a vow to observe the following rules of conduct *viz.*, to regard devotees of Śiva as Śiva himself, not to request others including the king for money, not to be addicted to bad habits (vyasanas), to control one's own self and to promote Śivabhakti and Śivācāra etc.

Basava's administration was very successful. There was prosperity in the kingdom. Large numbers of Śiva's devotees flocked to him. So Kalyāṇa became a centre.

The purāṇa narrates miracles worked by Śrī Basavēśvara. Many pious deeds which glorified Śivabhakti are narrated. The major portion of the purāṇa contains Śivaśaraṇa Carite. The foremost among them are Cannabasavcśvara, Prabhu, Maḍivāḷa Mācayya, Kinnara Brahmayya, Nuliya Candayya, Mōḷige Mārayya and others. In addition to these the purāṇa supplies us information about the Śivaśaraṇas who lived before and a few years after Śrī Basavēśvara. Among them Siriyāḷaseṭṭi, Dēvara Dāsimayya, Śaṅkara Dāsimayya, Ādayya, Ekāntada Rāmayya and others.

The work of Śrī Basavēśvara consisted not only of preaching and promotion of Śivadharma but also effecting social reforms such as dignity of labour, equality of all men and women of all communities irrespective of caste and creed. He discouraged the then prevailing Varṇāśrama dharmas. He preached and introduced a popular religion which showed love for all and respected the presence of the divine in all individuals. He and Śaraṇas preached in the language of the people the soul stirring spiritual consciousness. The movement touched the root of the people's conscience and fed it with the water of life. Thought of right and wrong, examination of one's self and an effort to live righteously became common among his followers.

The orthodox section did not tolerate the growing influence of Śrī Basavēśvara and his followers. They complained to the king about Śrī Basava's preachings and partiality to Śivaśaraṇas. The king, Bijjaḷa was also perhaps jealous of the growing influence of Śrī Basavēśvara among the masses. The matter headed towards a crisis when Bijjaḷa punished Haraḷayya and Madhuvayya, the followers of Śrī Basavēśvara.

Śrī Basavēśvara left Kalyāṇa and went to Kūḍala Saṅgama. There he was absorbed in his personal deity Saṅgamēśvara.

The speciality of this poem is that each chapter commences with an address to Keśavāmātya to hear the story of Basava attentively. For example:

mahesa pādāṁbuja bhṛṅgalīlā mahoktamāṅgasthiracāru kīrte
ākarṇayemāṁ basavāvakāraślyāghyāṁ kathāṁ keśavamantrivarya

At the end of each chapter again there is a blessing to Keśavāmātya, as at the end of first chapter:

> maṇikirīṭamakaṅgajadedinīvalaya kāhara cāmarasampadaḥ
> diśatu tubyamumādayito yaśaḥ kavacitakhila diktaṭa keśava

At the end of the second chapter,

> keśirāja tavakīrtimanjarī gandhasāra ghanasāra bandhurā
> atanoti haridantināṁ karṇacāmarakalāpa cāturīṁ

Generally the poets supply information regarding their learning, family history and preceptors. From the works of Bhavabhūti and Ṣaḍakṣaradēva we find much information about them. But great poets like Kālidāsa, and Shakespeare in English have supplied no information about them. Kāñci Śankarārādhya belongs to the latter group. He has supplied very slight information about his personal history. That is why he is known as 'ātmaślāghānabhijña.' However we know from him that his guru was Prakāśānandadeśika, but who he is and what contribution he has made is not mentioned. At the end of each chapter there is a colophon

> ityasaṅkhyāta māheśvara divya śrīpādapadma saurabhabhrama
> rāya māṇasya nirmala śaṁbhuprasādopabhogasangata sukhasudhā
> jaladhinimagnasvāṅkasya pramathakaveḥ śaṅkarāryasya kṛ
> taubasaveśavijaye......nāma......adhyāyaḥ......

From the above summary of the Basava purāṇa of Śaṅkarārādhya it is clear that the life sketch of Śrī Basavēśvara is in many respects similar to one presented in the Kannaḍa and Telugu Basava purāṇas. There are small variations but on the whole it is the same.

There is as already indicated another Basava purāṇa in Sanskrit the authorship of which is attributed to Vyāsa, the author of Mahabhārata and purāṇas. It is stated in the Purāṇa that the Basavēśvara story forms part of 'Bhaviṣyottara purāṇa.' But it is clear from the book itself that it was composed under the patronage of Basavēśa belonging to Kandūkarikula. His family is described in the last chapter. It is as follows:

There was a town called Helāpuri situated between Kṛṣṇā and Godāvarī. There lived a great man by name Paraliṅga. He was well versed in nītiśāstra. He was a man of great devotion to Śiva

and was following the Vīraśaiva traditions. His wife was Vīrāṁbā. They had a son named Amṛtaliṅga who practised penance at Śrīśaila. His son was Mallikārjuna. He was a strict Vīraśaiva and was considered as an incarnation of Śrīśaila Mallikārjuna. He was worshipped by other kings. His wife was Gurvāṁbā. A son named Nīraliṅga was born to him. The son of Nīraliṅga was Amṛtaliṅga. His son was Vīreśa. His son was Sālveśa. His son was Mūrtīśa. His son was Kūḍala Saṅgama and his son was Mallikārjuna. His son was Basava. He was initiated (liṅgadhāraṇa) by Sadāśivaguru of Pālakavaṁśa.

From this genealogy it is clear that the patron of author was Basavēśa belonging to Kandūkarikula and was ruling at Helāpura in the present Āndhra State. This Basavēśvara is stated to be in the Vyāsokta purāṇa to be the incarnation of Basavēśvara of Kalyāṇa. This Kandūkuri may be misspelling for Kandakur or Skandapura, but there is material available at present to confirm the identity of the two places. If the identity can be established this purāṇa was written under the patronage of Basavēśa belonging to the royal family which claimed Helāpuri as their capital. The date of the purāṇa can not be determined definitely, but it is clear that it was composed after the fourteenth century.

In the second chapter the names of Visveśvarārādhya, Paṇḍitārādhya, Śrīpati, Ekorāma, Mañcaṇṇa Paṇḍita, Koṭipallārādhya, the Vīraśaiva teachers, are mentioned. Koṭipallārādhya was the ancestor of Gurudeva, who wrote a commentary called Sarvārthadāyinī to Vṛṣabha purāṇa or Basava purāṇa of Kāñci Śankarārādhya. He is also the author of Vīraśaivācāra pradīpikā. He lived probably at the end of the sixteenth century. Koṭipallārādhya appears to have lived in the thirteenth or fourteenth century since ten generations intervened between him and Gurubasavēśa. Therefore the approximate date of this Basava purāṇa may be the fourteenth century. It was composed after the Basava purāṇa of Kāñci Śankarārādhya. It tallies closely in giving the life and work of Basavēśvara with the Śankarārādhya's work. Here and there it supplies detailed information not found in the first work. The birth place of Basava according

to this is Hiṅgulipura that is the modern Iṅgaḷēśvara abour nine miles to the south-east of Bāgevāḍi, Bijapur District.

According to Vyāsokta Basava Purāṇa, the story of Basavēśvara is narrated to Agastya by Skanda or Kumāra. It consists of forty-four chapters of which the first and the last two deal with things not found in Śaṅkarārādhya's Vṛṣabhapurāṇa. Although there is general agreement regarding the stories of Śivaśaraṇas it is not a copy of Śaṅkarārādya's purāṇa. There are differences here and there. Both are written in simple Sanskrit in order that they should be understood by ordinary persons. In both the works the birth date (janma tithi) of Śrī Basaveśvara is given as follows.

ardhodaye tasya kaṇṭhe badhvā liṅgātmakaṁ śivaṁ
ayaṁ basavarājākhyo bhaktibhāṇḍāgṛhaṁ bhavet

Vṛṣabheśvara purāṇa. Ch. III. st. 57.

mīnasthite bhṛgoḥputremeṣasthe ca divākare
tulāsthite ca tatputre karkaṭasthe bṛhaspatau
śaśāṅke rohiṇī saṁsthe makarasthe ca bhūsute
śiśorardhodaye jāte lagne karkaṭasaṁjñake
saṅgameśastadātūrṇamadṛśyatvam samāyayau
bhūtipaṭṭaṁ tataścakre svahastenaiva deśikaḥ
nikṣipya mastake hastam tasya padma samaprabhaṁ
tamaḥ paṭalamutsārya tatkāraṇa śarīragaṁ
śaivīṁ kalāṁ samākṛṣya parātparatarāṁ guruḥ
śiśorbhāvena saṁyojya manasāśyojayat svayaṁ
manasādṛṣyideśaṁ tu nītvā tāṁ paramāṁ kalāṁ
ṣaḍadhvaśodhitaṁ liṅgaṁ candrakānta śilāmayaṁ
nītvā tatra kalāṁ sūkṣmāṁ sanniveśya kṛpānidhiḥ
śaivīṁ pañcākṣarīṁ puṇyāṁ praṇavena samanvitāṁ
nigūḍhaṁ dakṣiṇe karṇe jajāpa parameśvaraḥ
tatastat kaṇṭhadeśe tu cakre liṅgasya dhāraṇaṁ
kṛttvaivaṁ cinmayīṁ dikṣāṁ sarvaśāstreṣu gopikāṁ
bālendu vilasanmūrdhnā bhālabhāgasyalocanaḥ
kāṣāyakanthāsanchanna dīpyamānastanubhṛṣaṁ
tāmrakuṇḍalasaṁśobhi karṇadvandvavirājitaḥ
bhaktaveṣadharaḥ śrīmān saṅgameśaḥ parātparaḥ
paśyantsīṣu ca kāntasu mādāṁbāṁ āha deśikaḥ
ayi bhadre mahābhāge śiśorasya mahāmateḥ
na kadāpi payodehi liṅgamūrteranarpitaṁ

viśvaṁ vasati yatra etadvasati atra maheśvare
tavaiva bālakaḥ śrīmān manovākkāyakarmabhiḥ
ādyasya ca vakārasyahyabhedena bakārataḥ
eṣosyaṁ bālakaḥ śrīmān basaveśvaranāmadhṛt
parātparatare liṅge ye vasanti maheśvarāḥ
gacchatyetān svayaṁ bhaktyā tenābyaṁ basaveśvaraḥ

Vyāsokta Basavapurāṇa Ch. IV. sl. 34-48.

At the end of each chapter the colophon reads "iti bādarāyaṇa maharṣipraṇīte basavapurāṇe svarūpagranthe paramarahasye kumārāragastya saṁvāde......nāma......adhyāyaḥ." From this it appears that it is also called 'paramarahasya' and 'svarūpagrantha.'

As stated above the summary of the life and work of Śrī Basavēśvara is found in the Śivatattva Ratnākara Kallola 4 Taraṅga 9 and 10.

It contains all the facts summarised in hundred verses from Basava purāṇas. At the end it is stated that Basavēśvara told his followers to settle in the territory called Malladēśa which would be ruled by kings following the Vīraśaiva religion and philosophy propagated by Basavēśvara and other Śaraṇas.

In the Sūkṣmāgama paṭala II the twenty five līlās of Śiva are mentioned. Of these one is the līlā of Vṛṣārūḍha mūrti. It is explained therein how Vṛṣa became vehicle (vāhana) of Śiva. Vṛṣa is identified with Dharma, Viṣṇu and Śiva himself. This interpretation of Vṛṣa is found in the Sanskrit and Kannaḍa Basava purāṇas. A ṛṣi named Śilāda practised penance and obtained a son who became a vāhana of Śiva. Sakaleśa Mādarasa who lived before Basava and practised severe penance in Śrīśaila obtained Nandi as his son. The area where he practised is known as Nandimaṇḍala and the place where he performed penance is identified with present Mahānandikṣetra. The Basava purāṇas in Sanskrit, Kannaḍa and Telugu identify Śrī Basavēśvara of Kalyāṇa with Vṛṣabha or Nandi, the vāhana of Śiva, and accept him as his incarnation.

From the above account it is clear that the Sanskrit Basava purāṇas depict Śrī Basavēśvara as an incarnation of Vṛṣabha. They further go to identity him with Śiva as he is called dvitīyaśaṁbhu

(the second Śiva). It is he who revived and reformed the Vīraśaiva religion in Karnāṭak which spread even to Mahārāṣṭra, Āndhra and Tamiḷ country, that is, the whole of South India.

S. C. NANDIMATH

See the fugitive hare
and the hounds in hot pursuit!
The numerous progeny of Desire
are after me —
hell-hounds are they all.
Save me from this rushing fate,
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama! ᛝ

BASAVAṆṆA IN TAMIḶ LITERATURE

I. Basava Purāṇam:

There are two major works and one minor work in Tamiḷ Literature which give a complete biography of Basavaṇṇa. They are Basava Purāṇa, Prabu Liṅga Līlai and Basava Purāṇa Śathakaṁ respectively. The name of the author of Basava Purāṇaṁ is not known. He says in the preface to this great work that Pālkuriki Sōmanātha Paṇḍithar had first composed Basava Purāṇa in the Telugu language, that Bhīma Kavi translated the same in Kannaḍa and which again in response to the wishes and requests of Cennabasava and other Vīraśaiva saints of Kancheepuraṁ, was translated into Tamiḷ. From the preface we are able to learn that this work must have been undertaken and completed by the author during the 17th century A.D. From the editor's notes in the preface we understand that there is a Sanskrit version of Basava Purāṇaṁ also and the name of the author is Śrī Saṅkarārya Vīraśaiva, a scholar of repute.

Shri Nāgi Cheṭṭiar of Salem is the editor of this Basava Purāṇaṁ in Tamiḷ. The date of this Tamiḷ edition is 1931. This edition contains an elaborate word-for-word commentary, paraphrase and ample foot-notes for each stanza. These help the reader to understand the meaning and explanation of the verses very clearly. The book contains about 950 pages. The style of this Purāṇaṁ is lucid and the verse readable and understandable without much difficulty by all literates. This work contains eight large chapters called Charukkams. They are Paira Charukkam, Thiru Avathara

Charukkam, Upadeśa Charukkam, Thiru Vilaiyadal Charukkam, Thiru Kootha Charukkam and finally Thiru Charukkam. Each Charukkam is, in turn, divided into so many Purāṇaṁs which illustrate the biographies of Śaraṇas and the great deeds of Basavaṇṇa.

In Paira Charukkam the author explains the reason for composing this great work in Tamiḷ, the origin of this work first in Telugu, and then gives the translation of the same in Tamiḷ. Then the blessings of many gods and Śivaśaraṇas are invoked to make this monumental literary work a success.

Next comes Thiru Kailaya Charukkam. The description of Mount Kailas, the holy abode of Lord Śiva, Umai His consort and the court of the Lord vividly comes at the beginning of this chapter. Then Saint Nārada arrives at the court and complains of the spread of Jainism to the extinction of Vīraśāivism or Bhakthi-Mārga in *Boologa* and implores Lord Śiva to remedy this state of affairs. Lord Śiva promises to send Nandi Deva, His own prototype. Śiva speaks highly of the purity of character and conduct, and the wisdom and the piety of Nandi Deva. He calls Nandi Deva and sends him to *Boologa* with a special mission to rescue Vīraśaivam from the onslaughts of Jainism. Nārada is very pleased to hear this and returns home, fully satisfied with the success of his spiritual mission.

Thiru Avathara Charukkam speaks of the birth of Basavaṇṇa in detail. His parents are Matharasar and Mathambai. They are Brahmins and live at Iṅgulapuri. They are childless for a long time and then with the blessings of Lord Śiva Mathambai conceives. She carries the baby for three years — an unusually long period of gestation. At her request, Lord Śiva relieves her of the burden and she gives birth to a boy. This is Basavaṇṇa, the dynamic personality. Even at the time of his birth the child wears a Liṅgaṁ on his neck. Just then Lord Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvara appears in the form of a Jaṅgama Guru, and tells the parents that it was He that adorned the neck of the child with Śiva Liṅgam even before the birth of the child, His abode is at Kūḍala Saṅgamaṁ and that they should name their child as Basavēśvaran. And then the Guru

disappears. The parents and others assembled there greatly marvelled at the mercy and love shown by Lord Śiva to them.

At the age of eight the parents make elaborate preparations for celebrating the Sacred-Thread-Ceremony of their son. But the boy refuses to wear the sacred-thread and points to the Śiva Liṅgaṁ already worn around his neck. There ensues a long dispute between the father and the son over the merits of Brahminism championed by the father and the merits of Vīraśaivaṁ or the Bhakthi Mārga, the age old faith, extolled by the son. Finally, the son gets the better in the philosophical and religious discourse. He tells his father firmly that he has adopted Vīraśaivam as his religion because of its intrinsic merits, and that they are no longer his parents but Lord Śiva and the Śivaśaraṇas are alone his real parents. So saying, he leaves them once for all with his sister Nāgambai, joins the Śivaśaraṇas and lives separately.

Baladēvar is the maternal uncle of Basavaṇṇa. He is the Prime Minister as well as Commander-in-chief of King Bijjaḷa. Baladēvar is highly pleased with the bearing and conduct of his nephew. He takes him to Kalyāṇapuri his capital city in a palanquin. He gives his daughter Gaṅgambai in marriage to him. Basavaṇṇa is detached from family and worldly pleasures from the very beginning of his life and has dedicated his soul and body to the spread of the cult of Bhakti but he is forced into the marriage because he believes that Lord Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvar has ordained so. Soon after the marriage, Basavaṇṇa goes to Kūḍala Saṅgamaṁ, about hundred miles from Kalyāṇ with his wife and sister. Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvar again appears in the form of a Jaṅgama Guru, receives him with open arms, teaches him all the principles and ethics of Vīraśaivam, embraces him and then disappears. Basavaṇṇa stays there for a few days worshipping the deity. All these are clearly depicted in Upadēśa Charukkam.

Next comes Thanda Nayaka Charukkam. In the mean time Baladēvar expires. Kind Bijjaḷa sends for Basavaṇṇa to accept the post of his uncle and father-in-law. Basavaṇṇa refuses at first for fear of being entangled in the whirlpool of hot politics. Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvar again appears at this juncture in the form of his Guru

and asks him to respond to the King's request in the interest of Bhakthi Mārga. Basavaṇṇa obeys the Lord, goes to the capital and takes up the joint post of Prime Minister and Commander-in-chief. When the King and the courtiers are assembled in the durbar-hall, a palm leaf falls from the sky before the throne. Of all the learned people Basavaṇṇa alone is able to decipher the script written in that leaf, which referred to a large amount of treasure hidden underneath the throne and this was found to be true. The King is highly pleased with the sagacity of his new Prime Minister, and provides him with all amenities and invests him with all powers. Thus invested with the insignia of his office and elated with the success at the beginning of his career, Basavaṇṇa the Prime Minister and commander combined in one begins really to rule the kingdom. But even in the midst of plenty Basavaṇṇa always feels humble in the presence of the Jaṅgamas and the Śaraṇas and places all his possessions at their disposal.

Now comes Cennabasava his nephew from Kūḍala Saṅgamaṁ where his sister stays, dedicating her entire life to the Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvar. He helps his uncle Basavaṇṇa in the great task of spreading the cult of Bhakthi among the masses irrespective of caste, creed and sex notwithstanding the onslaughts of Jainism on the one hand and the strong opposition of some self-seeking Brahmins on the other hand. Cennabasava is spoken of both in the Basava purāṇa and Prabuliṅgalīlai as the greatest of the Vīraśaiva saints of his time and possessor of all knowledge about Vīraśaivam and all other comparative philosophies of this world. Lord Śiva watches the career of Basavaṇṇa from Kailās, descends to the earth in the form of a Jaṅgama, takes the name of Allamaprabu, goes to Basavaṇṇa voluntarily, blesses him, invests him with all supernatural powers and then disappears. Basavaṇṇa is greatly elated over this rare opportunity of being blessed by Allamaprabu who is none other than Lord Śiva Himself.

Then follows Thiruvilaiyadal Charukkam. The stories of fifteen Jaṅgamas are well narrated in this. In this Charukkam all the miraculous powers possessed by Basavaṇṇa are well illustrated

through rare acts of his. To mention one, Basavaṇṇa changes the brinjals worn by the robbers who have entered his mutt to rob, into Śiva Liṅgams with a mere merciful and entrancing look. Thus he converts them to Vīraśaivaṁ in no time, takes them into his fold and treats them with great honour and love, making no distinction from all other Jaṅgamas and Śaraṇas assembled there to be worshipped by the great Prime Minister. Basavaṇṇa takes this opportunity to explain all the merits of the cult of Bhakthi and asserts that it is the only path which can win the love of the down-trodden for whom true religion should strive to find salvation. King Bijjaḷa hears of the miraculous mystic powers possessed by his Prime Minister. He himself tests them and makes his minister undergo many ordeals but Basavaṇṇa succeeds every time. As a consequence, his name and fame spread not only in Kannaḍa Dēśa but far and wide also.

Then comes Thiru Kootha Charukkam. The stories of eighteen Jaṅgamas are given here. On hearing the devotion of Basavaṇṇa to the Jaṅgamas and Śaraṇas thousands of them flock to the capital city from all parts of this holy and hoary land. They are warmly received, respected and well attended to. Among them, these eighteen are the most important. They are given separate mutts to live in and provided with all amenities of life every day. They belong to different professions but by conviction they are brought under the same fold of Vīraśaivam and are treated alike under the benign influence of the benevolent prime minister. Basavaṇṇa without any tinge of pride or vanity worships them and serves them with all sense of humility. The Śivaśaraṇas live fully contented at the capital under the protection of their prime minister. They too work many a miracle which goes to enhance their reputation both in the eyes of the public and the king.

Thiru Vattu Charukkam follows next. The stories of nine Jaṅgamas are given here. The great cult of Bhakthi which is spreading like wild fire in the country by the sincere efforts of Basavaṇṇa the great dynamic religious personality, has not only won the love of the Jaṅgamas and Śaraṇas but ultimately that of the King also, though he himself is a Jain by conviction. But this very fact inflames the

envy and hatred of the selfish Jains and the Brahmins at Kalyāṇ. They try to defame Basavaṇṇa by trying to drag him into the whirlpool of religious controversies. But Basavaṇṇa comes through unscathed in all these with the help of such great Vīraśaivite contemporaries as Maḍivāḷa Māchaiyer and Cennabasava Dēva. The discomfiture at the hands of Basavaṇṇa only infuriates his enemies. Having failed in their direct attempt to bring down Basavaṇṇa to his heels they indulge in all sorts of secret means of instigating the King against his own prime minister. As a result, a civil war breaks out in the country. The king is assassinated by one Saha Dēva Thanda Nāthar. After this unhappy incident Basavaṇṇa and many other Śaraṇas leave Kalyāṇ once for all and go to Kūḍala Saṅgamaṁ. Since his mission on earth is over he prays Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvar that he might be taken back into his fold. Lord Śiva appears in the form of his old Guru again and embraces him. In a moment Basavaṇṇa disappears into the Śiva Liṅgam. And then his sister Nāgambai and thousands of Jaṅgamas are also taken into the fold of the same Liṅgaṁ. Maḍiwāḷa Māchaiyer and Cennabasava Dēva leave the capital city once for all and settle at Uḷuvai, a place in the district of North Canara. Sahala Mathirasaiyer also leaves the capital city for Śri Śailaṁ a great religious centre for Vīraśaivites in Andhra Pradesh.

It would not be out of place if I mention here that nothing is said about his wife Gaṅgambai after her marriage except in two passages in Basava Purāṇaṁ. In Adai Valantha Purāṇaṁ, a debaucherous Jaṅgama wants the precious saree of Basavaṇṇa's wife for his concubine. Without any hesitation Basavaṇṇa undresses his wife but the saree goes on increasing endlessly in length. At last he cuts a portion of it and gives it away to that Jaṅgama. On another occasion, another Jaṅgama asks Basavaṇṇa for the ear-rings of his wife. They are given to him without any ado.

Further, from this Purāṇaṁ we are able to learn that the prominent contemporaries of Basavaṇṇa are King Bijjaḷa, Maḍivāḷa Māchaiyer, Sikka Mathiyer, Saṅkara Dāsaiyer, Nimmavai (woman), Alayudaiar, Kinnarapramaiyer, Kalaiketha Brahmaiyer, Mōḷiga

Māraiyer, Kannara Brahmaiyer, Musundi Chavundaiyer, Surigai Chavundaiyer, Telungu Somaiyer, Ekantha Rāmaiyer, Kinnaraiyer, Metha Koṭhaiyer, Saha Dēva Thanda Nathar, Allaiyer, Mathuvaiyer and Cennabasava Dēva and that they greatly helped him to spread this cult.

II. Prabhu Liṅga Līlai:

Another great work which speaks of Basavaṇṇa in Tamiḷ is Prabhu Liṅga Līlai. This was composed by Thurai-maṅgalam Śivaprakāśa Swāmigaḷ who was one of the greatest saint-poets of Tamiḷ Nāḍ. He lived in the middle of 17th century A.D. He lived for about thirty-two years only. During this short span of his life he produced thirty-two works in Tamiḷ, most of which contain all the philosophy of Vīraśaivaṁ. One of them is Prabu Liṅga Līlai. This contains twenty-five cantos in verse. Even in the preface the author invokes the blessings of Basavaṇṇa on his work. In this stanza the love and mercy evinced by Basavaṇṇa to the robbers and their conversion as a result to Vīraśaivaṁ are described.

The hero of this great work is Allamaprabu who is sent by Lord Śiva from Kailās to establish and strengthen Vīraśaivam in Boologa. After some time Śiva sends Nandi Dēva also to the earth to understand Allamaprabhu, learn the principles of Vīraśaivaṁ from him and spread them in Boologa. According to Lord Śiva the cult of Bhakthi is the easiest and surest way to attain Mokṣa whereas others are not. Lord Śiva ordains other Ganars also to be born on this earth, to see for themselves whether Allamaprabu spreads Vīraśaivam and how Nandi Dēva follows him in establishing the cult of Bhakthi. It is also said in this work that all Dēvars feel extremely glad that Nandi Dēva will surely drive away Jainism and establish the cult of Bhakthi in Boologa.

Accordingly Nandi Dēva is born on this earth as Basava. He receives Allama twice in his mutt, has communion with him for a number of days, worships him as Śiva and learns all the cardinal principles of Vīraśaivam. And then Allama leaves Basavaṇṇa, goes from place to place preaching the message of Bhakthi to all and converting them to the cult, irrespective of caste, creed, age and sex.

In the last canto of this work containing the philosophy of Vīraśaivaṁ, Lord Śiva explains to Umai how Vīraśaivaṁ tops the list of all religions in this world because of its rationalistic and intrinsic principles about the attainment of Mukthi. Nothing is said about the end of Basavaṇṇa in this work.

There are a few minor differences between Basava purāṇaṁ and Prabuliṅga Līlai about the life of Basavaṇṇa. The hero of Basava purāṇaṁ is Basavaṇṇa whereas the hero of Prabu Liṅga Līlai is Allamaprabu. Therefore, only one small purāṇaṁ is devoted to Allama Prabhu in Basava purāṇaṁ whereas the whole of Prabu Liṅga Līlai describes out and out the līlas of Allama Prabu. Likewise, Basava purāṇaṁ narrates the biography of Basavaṇṇa from his birth upto his attainment of Mukthi whereas Prabu Liṅga Līlai deals with the birth etc. but remains silent about the end of Basavaṇṇa. The other minor differences are:

1. Nothing is mentioned about the birth of a son to Basavaṇṇa in Basava Purāṇa but in Prabu Liṅga Līlai it is said that a son by name Saṅgamēśa Desikan is born to him.

2. Nothing is said about Baladēva the uncle and father-in-law of Basavaṇṇa in Prabu Liṅga Līlai. It is simply stated that Bijjaḷa the King of Kalyāṇ got Basavaṇṇa married to a girl with great pomp and show. These are the only minor differences that we are able to find between Basava Purāṇaṁ and Prabu Liṅga Līlai in the biography of Basavaṇṇa. In all other aspects they agree.

III. Basava Purāṇa Śathakaṁ:

Another small work which has devoted its pages entirely to the biography of Basavaṇṇa is Basava Purāṇa Śathakaṁ. This is nothing but a condensation of the bigger Basava Purāṇaṁ mentioned earlier. This contains 101 stanzas. The style is so simple that even an ordinary literate is not only able to read it but to get it by heart also. The aim of the author in producing this work must be to popularise the biography of Basavaṇṇa in Tamiḷ Nāḍ. The name of the author is Śrī Śivasaṅkara Iyer, an ardent Vīraśaivite of a village called Kanakiliyanur in Tamiḷ Nāḍ. He has produced some other minor works also in Tamiḷ. One of his descendants still alive is

Śrī Kalyana Veera Iyer of the same place. He has edited this work and brought it to light a couple of yeaıs ago. The editor's paraphrase below each stanza greatly helps the reader to understand the contents of the verse. This facilitates every reader to have a continuous picture of the story of Basava. The biography contained in this Śathakam is entirely based on Basava Purāṇaṁ and hence there are no variations at all.

IV. Some other references to Basavaṇṇa in works in Tamiḷ:

1. *Sithantha Sikamani*

This is one of the great works produced by Thurai Maṅgalaṁ Śivaprakāśa Swāmigaḷ already referred to in these pages. This work gives a full treatment of the philosophy of Vīraśaivaṁ. In its preface the author has devoted a stanza to the worship of Basavaṇṇa whom he has deified. The content of this stanza is that the worship of Basavaṇṇa is equal to the worship of thousands of Śivaśaraṇas.

2. "Avinasi Nathar Nenju Vidvo Thoothu," "Nittanuboothi Saram", "Veerasingathana Puranam" and "Kumaresa Venba" are some other Tamiḷ compositions in verse in which glowing references have been made to Basavaṇṇa's great deeds in helping the Jaṅgamas, in spreading the cult of Vīraśaivaṁ or Bhakti Mārga in this world and in withholding the onslaughts of Jainism.

S. SOMASUNDARAM

I am but a beggar in need of devotion.
I begged at the door of Kakkayya;
I begged at the door of Cennayya;
and I entreated Dāsayya too at his door.
All the Holy Ancients drew around
to give alms of devotion unto me;
and the bowl of my Self
became full, O Kūḍala Saṅgama. ‡

BASAVĒŚVARA IN TELUGU LITERATURE

The well known reviver of Vīraśaivism in South India, Śrī Basavēśvara was born in or about 1131 A.D. at Iṅgaḷēśvara Bāgevāḍī, in Bijapur District, Mysore State. History says that Basavēśvara's span of life lasted only a short period of thirty-six years. The earliest writers on Basavēśvara, his life and services for the Vīraśaiva religion are Harīśvara of Haṁpi (Paṁpākṣētra) in Kannaḍa and Pālkurki Sōmanātha of Pālakurki in Telugu. Both of these poets were very near comtemporaries of Basavēśvara and so their works deserve more weight and credit as to the knowledgeability about the history of Basavēśvara. Harīśvara is well known as a Ragaḷe poet, who wrote about the lives of several ancient (purātana) and contemporary Śiva Bhaktas in the Ragaḷe metre. His work on Basavēśvara is known as Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe but to our misfortune it is not available in its complete form. Some years ago, it was printed and published in Mysore only in an incomplete state. The latter portion of the work which was lost in oblivion has not been published anywhere. From this work, it appears that Basavēśvara was the incarnation of a Śivalōka Pramatha, Vṛṣabhamukha by name and that in his youth Basavēśvara joined, at the suggestion of his Guru Kūḍala Saṅgamēśvara, as Minister under King Bijjaḷa who was ruling at Maṅgaḷawāḍa in the 'Tardwāḍi-seema' as a vassal or Sōmanātha-Daṇḍanātha under the Western Cālukya Emperors of Kalyāṇa. According to traditional history it appears that while serving under the Western Cālukyas, Bijjaḷa

revolted against them some years later and that, in or about 1162 A.D., he installed himself on the Cālukyan throne at Kalyāṇa ousting King Tailapa. Though Basaveśvara was by birth a Kannaḍiga, the credit of having written an extensive work about him in the form of a Purāṇa goes to the Telugu poet, Pālkurki Sōmanātha of Palakuri near Waraṅgal in the Telaṅgāṇa. Sōmanātha's Basava Purāṇaṁ was written as a Dwipada Kāvya in seven cantos (Āśvāsas). The life and history of Basavēśvara is interwoven in this work in the narration of the lives of several other ancient and contemporary Śiva Bhaktas. Bhīmakavi's Kannaḍa Basavapurāṇa written in or about 1369 A.D. is only a faithful translation of Sōmanātha's Telugu Basavapurāṇaṁ. No mention of Basavēśvara's service under Bijjaḷa at Maṅgaḷawāḍa is made in the Telugu work. From this work, it appears that Basavēśvara's maternal uncle Baladēva was working as the Minister of Bijjaḷa at Kalyāṇa, that Basavēśvara married his uncle's daughter, Gaṅgamamba and that on the death of Baladēva, Bijjaḷa appointed in his place Basavēśvara as the Minister. From Harīśvara's Ragaḷe it appears that at the time when Basavēśvara entered Service under Bijjaḷa at Maṅgaḷawāḍa, Siddhadaṇḍādhipa was the Chief Minister of Bijjaḷa at Maṅgaḷawāḍa. No mention of Basavēśvara's rule at Kalyāṇa is found in Harīśvara's work, perhaps as the latter portion thereof is lost and no mention of his stay at Maṅgaḷawāḍa is found in Sōmanātha's Telugu work. So it is possible to infer that Basavēśvara first entered the services of Bijjaḷa at Maṅgaḷawāḍa and carried on his mission of the revival of Vīraśaiva faith in the Karnāṭaka country and that later on he came to Kalyāṇa, the capital of Western Cālukyas along with Bijjaḷa and founded there the well known Anubhava-Maṇṭapaṁ, whereto several Śiva Bhaktas from different parts of the country flocked together and worked for the revival and spread of Vīraśaivism under the banner of Basavēśvara. Basava-Kalyāṇa was situated at the border of the Kannaḍa and Telugu countries and so, the influence of Basavēśvara's rule at Kalyāṇa led to the spread of Vīraśaivism in the adjoining Telugu country also almost at the same period. From history it appears that Bijjaḷa's rule at Kalyāṇa lasted only for a short period of about six years

1162 - 1168 A.D. and that after Bijjaḷa's death his sons Rāyamurāri and others also ruled for a short period of twelve years or so, when they were finally dethroned by King Sōmēśvara IV of the Western Cālukya family. So it seems that Basavēśvara and his followers worked for the spread of Vīraśaivisṁ while at Kalyāṇa for only six years or so and that a major part of their mission was carried on whilst Basavēśvara worked as Bijjaḷa's Minister at Maṅgaḷawāḍa. The chief contemporaries of Basavēśvara who strove along with him for the revival of Vīraśaivism are his nephew, Cennabasavēśvara (son of Nāgamamba) and Allama Prabhu. About Cennabasava a separate purāṇaṁ was written by Virūpākṣa Paṇḍit in Kannaḍa and by Attaluri Papayāmātya in Telugu in the eighteenth century. About Allama Prabhu, poet Cāmarasa wrote a separate work named Prabhuliṅga Līle during the reign of Prauḍhaḍēva Rāya of Bijayanagar about 1440 A.D. This work of Cāmarasa was rendered into Telugu as a Dwipada Kāvya by Piḍuparthi Sōmanātha Kavi about 1560 A.D. and in verse by his paternal uncle's son Basavappa. Among the contemporary Bhaktas who adhered to Basavēśvara and stood by his side in his revival of Vīraśaivism, Maḍivāḷa Mācayya and Kinnara Brahmayya may be mentioned as prominent and their stories are incorporated in the Telugu Basavapurāṇam of Pālkurki Sōmanātha.

A prominent contemporary of Basavēśvara, who worked for the revival of Śaiva and Vīra-Śaiva cults in the Telugu country was Mallikārjuna Paṇḍitārādhya. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and Telugu. He was born in Āndhra Deśa at Drākṣarāma in the East Godavari district. The same poet Pālkurki Sōmanātha who composed Basavapurāṇam in regard to Basavēśvara wrote a similar work, in his later years, under the title Paṇḍitārādhya Cāritram in Telugu Dwipada metre and dedicated it to Basavēśvara himself. Fron this work, it appears that Paṇḍitārādhya in the course of his travels started for Basava-Kalyāṇa also to have a personal interview with Basavēśvara, but, while staying in the way at Vanipuram near Panagal came to know from some Jaṅgamas that eight days back as a result of the Krānti (Civil war) Basavēśvara ended his avatāra

and merged himself with Kūdala Saṅgamēśvara and so Paṇḍitārādhya diverted his journey to Śrīśailam for merging himself in Mallikārjuna Liṅga. Besides these works Sōmanātha compiled several minor works in praise of Basavēśvara. Like Basavēśvara's Vacanas in Kannaḍa Somanātha's minor works written in praise of Basavēśvara are very extensive and unlimited....Many of them have become extinct like Basava Vacanas and very few of them only are now extant. The chief of them, Vṛṣādhipa Śatakaṁ written in Utpala and Chaṁpaka verses with the Makuṭa. '*Basavā Basavā Basavā Vṛṣādhipā*' and Chaturveda Saramu written in Sīsa verses with the Makuṭa of Basavaliṅga. Somanātha mentioned in his preface of Paṇḍitārādhya Cāritra that the Bhaktas of his time praised him as follows:

Basavaṇṇa mahima śuṁbhadbhaktiyukti

The Kannaḍa poet Sōmarāja praised Sōmanātha in the preface of his work" Śṛṅgārasāra (Udbhaṭa Caritra) as follows:

Samudañcadvṛṣabhastavāmaramahījārāmanaṁ somanaṁ

(Sōmaṇṇa the celestial garden of Basavastavas,) Piḍuparthi Sōmanāthakavi a Śiṣya Praśiṣya of Palkurika Sōmanātha who flourished about 1560 A.D. rendered into Telugu verse the Dwipāda Basavapurānaṁ of Pālkurki Sōmanātha and in its preface he mentioned that Lord Śiva who had ordained Nandīśvara to take birth as Basavēśvara for the revival of Vīraśaivism on earth ordered another pramata Bhṛṅgēśvara to be born on earth as Pālkurki Sōmanātha for the spread of Basavēśvara's Carita. Besides Piḍuparthi Sōmanāthakavi, another Telugu poet, Mahādevārādhya of Vijayawāḍa also rendered later on in Telugu verse Pālkurki Sōmanātha's Dwipāda Basavapurāṇaṁ and dedicated it to Śrī Mallikārjuna Śiva Liṅga at Vijayawāḍa. This work has not however been published so far, as several portions of it have become extinct. Piḍuparthi Sōmanātha's Padya Basavapurāṇaṁ has been published completely. and it is a close and faithful version in verse of Pālkurki Somanātha's Dwipāda Kāvya. Śrīnātha Mahākavi rendered into Telugu verse, Palakurki Sōmanātha's dwipāda Paṇḍitārādhya Caritaṁ in or about

1400 A.D. but this work also has become extinct and has not been published anywhere.

Some centuries later, Tummanapalli Nāgabhūshana Kavi wrote another poetical work named Basava Vijayaṁ in three cantos about 1750 A.D. The poet mentions that Basava's history as told by the Minister Śivadēva Mantri to Kākatiyā King Pratāparudraṭa II is composed by him in Telugu verse. Shortly before or after this work, another work of the same name Basava Vijayaṁ was composed in Telugu Dwipāda by Nallanagondla Naganarādhya.

Besides the above works in poetry a few works about Basavēśvara's life were composed by Telugu poets in the shape of Yakṣa-gānamulu (a sort of dramatic composition). The following two works are prominent under this head.

1. Basava Kalyāṇamu by Anumōda Sanyāsi Kavi: from the name of this work, it appears that this relates to the marriage of Basavēśvara with Gaṅgamamba and Nilaṁbika.

2. Basava Mahimāmruta Vilāsamu by Kanuri Varavīrabhadra Kavi: this was dedicated by the poet to Sōmēśvara Śivaliṅga at Kolamupāka in Telaṅgaṇa and it deals with the history of Basavēśvara in several aspects. In the last century some modern Vīraśaiva poets composed some Śatakas in praise of Basavēśvara. Among them Basava-liṅga Śataka in Sīsa-Padyamulu composed by Putkota Somanārādhya Kavi may be cited as prominent. In imitation of Pālkurki Sōmanātha's Vṛṣādhipa Śatakaṁ, Penumatcha Mahadeva Kavi (Viśwa-brāhmin by caste) of Alamuru, East Godavari district, wrote and published, some years ago, another Śatakaṁ of the same name and with the same Makuṭa *Basavā Basavā Vṛṣādhipā* adopted by Sōmanātha Kavi.

In conclusion, I respectfully submit that the Telugu poets also recognised the greatness of Basavēśvara from the very beginning and composed several poetical works in praise of him. As stated above, Pālkurki Sōmanātha's Basava Purāṇaṁ in Dwipāda and its version in verse by his Praśiṣya Piḍuparthi Sōmanātha stand foremost and have earned immortal fame.

BANDARU THAMMAIAH

Is the master of the house gone out,
Or is he in?
Upon the threshold grasses sprout;
The house is just
A bowl of dust:
Is the master of the house gone out,
Or is he in?
When falsehood does infect your flesh
And your heart is a sensuous mesh,
The master of the house
Cannot be in, cannot be in,
*Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!**

BASAVAṆṆA'S VACANAS AS LITERATURE

I

There have been attempts made by Kannaḍa scholars in recent years to establish the antiquity of the *vacanas* and to locate their historical position in the perspective of Indian literary tradition as a whole. One such attempt by Dr. L. Basavarāju has shown with substantial evidence that "...The Vacana is the oldest known literary genre in Kannaḍa language. In the entire literary tradition of India nothing like them with their unique flavour can be encountered..."[1] He adds,"... The term 'Vacana' earlier covered a very wide range of writing which included the work of Basava and the other pioneers." It is interesting and useful as well to ask such questions as: How did the 'Vacana' which could not be easily fitted into the classification of literary grammarians, which was neither verse nor prose as we know it, originate? What were the primary sources that inspired its birth? Dr. M. Chidanandamoorthy has argued that its genesis can be traced more profitably to Kannaḍa literature itself, rather than to the Śaiva literature in Tamil, or the Sanskrit literature. Any one who is at all familiar with the flavour of ordinary life that the 'Vacanas' carry, would agree to some extent with their finding that it must have been the result of adapting the popular 'Tripadi'

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1 Introduction to '*Allamana Vacana Candrike*' pub. by Nalini Shankar Prakashana, Mysore, 1960 and '*Shivadas Geethanjali*' pub. in Jagadguru Shri Shivaratreeśvara Grantha Mālā, Mysore, 1965.

form in Kannaḍa for the purpose of religious preaching which could go straight to the heart of the common people.[2]

Already by about the 11th century the Vacana which was well above the commonness of prose and which had the inspired voice of poetry had crystallized in the writings of the Vīraśaiva Saints, the "Śaraṇas." In this connection we may mention the Vacanas of Mādāra Cannayya, Ḍōhara Kakkayya, Jēḍara Dāsimayya and the others. In his vacana Dāsimayya boldly takes over the ordinary living language of men and expresses his profoundest experience in a way which moved other men to their depth. In them we already see the "Vacana" in its mature form and strength. We may cite a vacana of Dāsimayya to justify this point. It runs:

> This earth is thy gift, its harvest, too;
> The wind that blows around us is thy gift.
> What is one to say of the curs which praise thee not
> Having enjoyed thy gifts, Oh! God Rāmanātha

In such vacanas what do we encounter but the essential ingredients of poetry itself ?—the natural rhythm and melody of their sound, the configuration of emotions, the finished form, the metaphorical and other modes of expression, and the effective use of language gathered from the process of living itself to embody metaphysical or mystical vision. Later on in the 12th century innumerable Vīraśaiva Saints, both men and women, took a vigorous part in the great religious revolution initiated by Basavaṇṇa. These great figures, while not dissociating themselves from their ordinary vocations of livelihood, brought about a revolution in Kannaḍa literature. It was they who succeeded in eliminating the artificial distance that had grown between the literary language of old Kannaḍa poetry and the spoken language of ordinary men and women, and restored the language of living human beings to its rightful place in the literary process. Their experience, their insights and ideals came to be enshrined in this simple but profoundly moving language.

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2 'Samshodhana Taranga, p. 26 pub. by 'Sarasa Sāhitya Prakāshan' Mysore, 1966.

Their words were regarded as the "Vacana Vēda" and their way of living came to be known as the "Vacana Dharma." Basavaṇṇa's vacanas reflect all their accumulated heritage. Therefore, though the primacy of Basavaṇṇa in the field of Vacana cannot be questioned, it must be acknowledged that his work owed its inspiration considerably to his predecessors and in particular to Dēvara Dāsimayya.[3] One can even trace many close parallels of expression and content between some of the Vacanas of both. Indeed, with characteristic modesty, Basavaṇṇa himself acknowledged this fact. He has himself said,

> When the words of the Pioneers
> Are like a stream of milk,
> With jaggery for its ooze
> And sugar for its silt,
> My reason is as one
> That digs a well apart,
> To drink a brackish water, Lord
> Kūḍala Saṅgama! †

However, it was Basavaṇṇa who made available for the ordinary folk the living waters of his personal experience. Thanks to him, many Vīraśaiva Saints created a whole literature whose main quality was honest and deep self-exploration. That is why these saints never wrote anything that they did not deeply and personally experience. This accounts for the fact that in most vacanas the experience and the language connected with the actual profession or occupation of the writer are crystallized. Inward exploration and the anguish of the soul became the very stuff of the literature produced in this period. Though the majority could hardly scale the metaphysical heights of that other great Vacana writer, Allama Prabhu, most of them could easily comprehend the homely language of Basavaṇṇa and could bathe in his universal compassion.

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3 'Dēvara Dāsimayya may be rightly called the first Architect of Vacana literature though not its pioneer'—Shri Siddhayya Purāṇik: '*Sharana Charitramruta* page 40, pub. by the Adult Education Council, Mysore, 1964.

† The English renderings of this and the subsequent vacanas bearing this mark are taken from the '*Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa*' trans. by Armando Menezes and S. M. Angadi, pub. by Aṇṇana Baḷaga, Sirigere, 1965. The rest are rendered by the author in collaboration with Shri K. Raghavendra Rao.

The author is grateful to Prof. Menezes for his kind permission to use the renderings.

Basava the man with his characteristic way of speaking, his luminous devotion, his sense of dedication, his powerful language, his religious and spiritual discipline, his transparent nature, his virtuous activity, his intense love and his inner peace is fully reflected in his vacanas. His heart which had been softened by intense devotion to god left no word he wrote without depth. The discipline of devotion, the inner struggle, the intense yearning to make life here and now worth while, his preachings and practice, his conduct and thought, the keenness of insight, the intensity of his emotions are his gifts to us through his vacanas. His is the vision of a mortal existence which is mouldable by human efforts here and now. His closeness to earth and our earth-bound destiny made him a genuine and passionate humanist. Basavaṇṇa was no direct cultivator of literature but literature came to him, garland in hand like a bride. Perhaps the vigour and verve, the strength and fibre, the unique pattern, the ease and naturalness, the loveliness of the spoken Kannaḍa language, burst through his vacanas, even though he might not have consciously planned to do so.

The literary quality of his vacanas has been unmistakably enhanced by his authentic way of using similes, illustrations, metaphors, imagery, word-pictures, gnomic sayings distilled from experience, contextually appropriate proverbs, tightly constructed expressions, countless excerpts from ordinary language and emotionally suggestive statements. It is the main purpose of this paper to examine these aspects. Though it has been the practice to examine Basavaṇṇa's vacanas against the background of the Vīraśaiva metaphysical doctrine of six stages (Ṣaṭsthala) attempts have also been made to look at them in a new way by emphasising his way of work, his progressive ideas of social reconstruction, and by emphasising the essential humanism of his unique vision.[4] It is clear from such statements of his as:

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4 '*Shree Basavannanavara Vachana Sangraha*' Ed. by S· S. Malwad, pub. by the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1963.
'*Vachana Sahitya Sangraha*' Ed. by S. S. Bhoosnurmath pub. by the Literary and Cultural Development Department, Bangalore, 1965.

Oh! Lord Kūḍals Saṅgama, I sing as I please
and no harm can come to thee!

that Basavaṇṇa's vacanas are spontaneous outpourings of his feelings.

There is no question but that all the figures of speech in poetry are essentially efforts to compare. Hence, all poetic effort, in a very broad sense, is a process of comparing, and is in the nature of a simile.[5] In the vacanas of Basavaṇṇa the function of a simile does not end with mere comparison. It is also used to evoke a vivid word-picture or to send words straight to their appointed target or to suggest a meaning in all its implications. Since they are fashioned out of felt experience, they throb with life. Moreover they generally tend towards the metaphorical mode. They express with utmost economy in a few words what may normally require as many sentences. As a result there is an intensity of expression which raises the level of their poetic fervour.

II

Let us examine the rich variety and the sheer originality of the world of similes that Basavaṇṇa has created. Here, for instance, is how Basavaṇṇa writes about the stature and position of his Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama as he personally experiences it:

It's like the secret fire
Hidden in water;
Like the flavour of the sap
In the tender plant;
Like to the perfume
Within the bud;
Like a maiden's love,
O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama! †

The point of these similes is that the fire hidden in water, the taste of the sap and the scent in the bud are not immediately noticeable

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5 prativastu prabhṛtiḥ upamā prapañcaḥ — Vamana: Kāvyālaṅkāra sūtra iv.

but they exist all the same. While these three similes are directed to outward objects, the last one brings us back to the human world. God's love is compared to the tender love of a virgin, and like the latter, it must be personally experienced to be understood. Moreover, it may be noted that these similes constitute a carefully constructed system of effects — the first three lead to, and enhance the effect of, the final comparison. It is impossible to illustrate the musical quality of the words in English, but suffice it to say that words in the vacanas have not merely meaning-function but also music-function. Sound strengthens meaning, and everything is articulated to produce maximum artistic communication.

In some vacanas, the similes solidify into telling images and add a special dimension to meaning as in:

> If you should speak, your words should be
> Pearls that are strung upon a thread.
>
> If you should speak, your words should be
> Like lustre by the ruby shed.
>
> If you should speak, your words should be
> A crystal's flash that cleaves the blue.
>
> If you should speak, great God must say
> Ay, ay, that's very true!
>
> But if your deed betrays your word,
> Can Kūḍala Saṅgama care for you? †

The above is a good illustration of the different levels at which the simile operates, from the quality of the pearl to the spiritual quality of self-realization.

Basavaṇṇa wants to express the idea in another vacana that the saints (Śaraṇas) are free and courageous souls, and one should never take liberties with them. This is how he does it:

> Like scratching one's cheek with cobra's hood,
> Like combing one's hair with a burning piece of wood,
> Like swinging in joy
> from the tiger's moustaches,
> If you, forgetfully, dare play with Lord's saints
> It is like falling into water tying limestone
> round your stomach!

One should notice how vividly the examples are given and how effectively they convey the main point. Thus one emotion or idea is comprehensively worked out in a single vacana through the simile. The wide range of animal similes he invokes is most remarkable. We have, for instance, similes which show a remarkable understanding of the qualities, good and bad, of the frog, the snake, the hare, the deer, the crow, the cock, the fox, the fog, the chameleon, the monkey, the buffalo, the elephant, the sheep, the donkey, the pig the cat, the rat, the parrot and so on.

Let us now take a look at the beautiful use of similes and metaphors in his vacanas. Perhaps very few writers in Kannaḍa could have shown the degree of self-awareness and self-exploration that Basavaṇṇa displays in his vacanas. Perhaps even those who can display these abilities could not have embodied their experience in such precise language. Some examples of this may be given here:

"As a dog riding a palanquin
My mind, on seeing a thing,
Reverts to its natural bent."

"This restless mind hops like the monkey on a branch"

"Like the dog that licks knife-edge for the taste of ghee"
(To describe those who were immersed in worldly life)

"Like the frog sheltering in the shade of a snake"
(To indicate that mortals live in the shadow of death and
yet know it not).

"The frog caught in serpent's mouth hungrily
yearns for the passing fly."

"The sheep brought for sacrifice eats the
branches brought for the decoration."

"Like the life of a bat!"
(To indicate a topsy-turvy life of blindness)

"Mind like the wild fig!
(Attractive to outward appearance but worm-ridden within)

"Like making the dough on the rough wool-blanket."
(To describe a hopelessly trangled situation)

Basavaṇṇa's spiritual practice, his struggle to pursue it against odds and his essential humility are all fully represented in his vacanas.

In one of his vacanas he graphically compares the hard way of spiritual life with "A saw that cuts while going in opposite directions." Other effective similies are: to describe the agony of the devotee, he uses the image of a person whose nose is being sliced off and who is further shown a mirror where he can see it bleed or the image of branding with burning iron rod a ripe wound. In another place he describes the worldly temptations in these words:

> My body and mind are dedicated to none but the Lord,
> I pray that the dog of worldly life should not
> despoil this offering!

He describes the futility of not making such dedication in the following telling manner. He says that it is "Like a spark undoing the hard-earned harvest of a whole year." The devotion which is only for outward show is as pointless "as using a ceremonial umbrella in the night." The idea is that nobody can see it in the night. Love of God must be spontaneous and genuine and should not be perfunctory or forced like the "deer that cannot run pretending that it is offering its flesh to the pursuing dog voluntarily."

In the Vīraśaiva tradition, the way of the Lord is the way of the Saints (the Śaraṇas). He describes the yearning he has for the company of Śaraṇas as "the yearning of an uncared of child for its mother," "the yearning of a cow for the company from which it has strayed." Later, the arrival of the saints is described as "as life-giving as the sun is to the lotus." The joy that he has when they come is compared to "The flooding of an ocean over a mustard seed." The rugged appearance of the saints which conceals their greatness is compared to the formation of ghee. He says that they are "like the ghee which comes out when the milk is soured and spoiled." Their words are like "the neem, bitter on the tongue but nourishing to the body."

The nature of the mystic experience is also captured in brilliant images which are sometimes similes and sometimes metaphors. It is "like the treasure hidden underground." "The jewel that is deep in the inner soul", and "the dream that a child has seen." The

point of all these is to describe something which cannot be displayed but only sensed.

Thus we can see that the world of similes that Basavaṇṇa invokes is a rich world. No other poet in Kannaḍa has used similes to this extent with such phenomenal success. Their variety and comprehensiveness are unparalleled in Kannaḍa.

III

Another technique of his that is worth noting is the use of illustrations.[6] These add to the poetic effect of the vacanas and also establish a doctrinal point most convincingly. Some examples of this are:

The Cakora waits, intent,
The moonlight's silver dawn;
The Lotus' heart is bent
Upon the splendid morn;
The bee's, on the flower's scent.
Even thus, for Thee, even thus
My heart is tremulous,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord! †

It is worth noting that he makes effective use of mythological tales in producing his results. A good example of this is:

At rise of moon the ocean swells;
It ebbs at waning of the moon...

When Rāhu puts a screen
Before the moon, pray, does the sea
Set up a cry?

And when the Sage drained up the sea,
Pray, did the moon come in between?

Nobody is for anybody, so!
The fallen have no friend!

Thou only, Lord
Kūḍala Saṅgama,
Art the world's kin! †

6 dṛṣṭāntaḥ punareteṣāṁ sarveṣāṁ pratibiṁbanaṁ—Kāvyaprakāśa, x

Sometimes a single vacana is filled with a series of such illustrations which have a cumulative effect. An excellent example of this is:

In making a pot,
The clay comes first;
In making an ornament,
The gold comes first;
In knowing Śiva's path,
The Guru's path comes first;
In knowing Kūḍala Saṅgama,
The fellowship of Śaraṇas
Comes first. †

Some of them are taken from ordinary experiences of life but are used in a way which has tremendous literary impact. Examples of this are:

Does not a crow, on seeing a crumb,
Call to its flock?
Does not a hen, on finding a drop,
Call, clacking, to her brood?
If, being a bhakta, a man lacks loyalty
To his own faith,
He's worse than hen or crow,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord! †

Often these are complex and they involve a pretty complicated structure. Illustrations with opposite implications are given, but they are eventually harmonised to emphasise the basic meaning. The most well known case of this is the following vacana:

Strong is the elephant: but could you say
Less strong the goad?
Nay, nay, not so!

Strong is the mountain: but could yoy say
The thunderbolt less strong?
Nay, nay, not so!

Strong is the darkness: but could you say
Less strong the light?
Nay, nay, not so!

Oblivion's strong: but could you say
Your love less strong?
Nay, nay, not so,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama! †

The illustrative technique has a tendency to spill over into the metaphorical mode. The result is what is offered as an example is turned into a metaphor proper. An example may be given:

Of what avail reading like a parrot?
This won't enable it to anticipate the cat's arrival.
The eyes that take in the whole universe
are utterly incapable of seeing a dagger that pierces from behind
We can know what we can see before us,
but of ourselves, we know nothing.

There is also a use of illustration in a systematically syllogistic form. One example of this is:

Should I say that the sea is great?
The earth holds it!
Should I say that the earth is great?
The jewel in the snake-god's hood
Holds that!
Should I say that the snake-god's great?
He is contained within the signet-ring
On the small finger of Pārvati!
Is then Pārvati great? She is
Parameśvara's better half!
Is this Parameśvara great, then? He's
Contained within the point of points
Of our Kūḍala Saṅga's Śaraṇas'
Minds! †

IV

Like his ability to use the simile and the illustration, his ability to use the metaphorical mode produces rich poetic effects. These metaphors fully embody the keenness of his personal experience, and a whole vacana turns out to be an elaborate metaphor. From a literary point of view, what is significant is that Basavaṇṇa's language

does not let him down. It rises to the occasion in all its splendid strength. As in the case of his general poetic approach itself, the metaphor also underscores the fact that Basavaṇṇa fashions his greatest poetry out of the commonest stuff of life. Two notable examples of this are:

As the green spreads before the brute, **
it bends to bite the grass :
it cannot help it.
Away then with the giddy green
of sensual pleasures;
rather feed me with devotion,
and slake my thirst
with wisdom pure,
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama![7]

Oh, the poor beast** thrashing his legs
When fallen into the mire!
What choice has it?
Good God, I'm gone, gone, Lord!
Oh, lift me to Thy heart —
A member of Thy herd,
My herdsman Thou!—
Before they seize the straggling thief
And thrash it, Lord,
Laying it to Thy shame!†

The mystical yearning of his soul finds expression in some of the finest metaphors in Kannaḍa. The best case of this is the vacana:

Melt my mind and purge its stains,
Test it and in fire refine!
Hammer, so the hammer pains,
To pure gold this heart of mine!
Beat from me, great Craftsman, beat
Anklets for Thy devotees' feet:
Save me, Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama!†

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7 The English rendering is taken from the 'Musings of Basava' by S. S. Bosawanal and K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar (Basel Mission Press, Mangalore, 1940).

**The reference in the original vacana is only to domestic cattle for which the translations proposed are 'brute' and 'beast.'

When such yearning reaches a point of absolute intensity, the metaphorical expression also reaches its fullest stature, as in the following vacana:

Make of my body, Lord, the pole;
Make of my head, the gourd;
Make of my nerves the wires, O Lord,
And of my fingers the plectrum make;
Intone Thy two-and-thirty notes;
Thump on my heart to beat the time,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!†

The ideal of spiritual realization within this material existence is most beautifully brought out in the following words:

Those who have money build
Temples to Śiva: what can I build?
A poor man, Lord, am I!
My body is the shrine,
Its pillars are my legs,
The golden pinnacle, my head.
Hear me, Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord,
There is destruction for what stands,
But not for that which moves!†

It is an essential aspect of his approach that this *world is important*, and our salvation has to be worked out through it. The soul must pass through the crucible of this existence. This is, indeed, the point of the vacana:

This mortal world is but the Maker's mint;
Those who earn merit here, earn also there;
And those who earn not here, earn neither there,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!†

V

Basavaṇṇa often gets his great poetic effects by using appropriate imagery or rich symbols or vivid word-pictures. These techniques are used to strengthen the effect of his experience and its

truth as poetry. One example is:

If you strike the anthill
Will the snake die?
What if you perform
The severest penance,
Will Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama
Have trust in those
Whose heart is not pure? †

We may now mention his use of symbols. The symbols are chosen with an assured sense of their associations. The best illustration of this is:

Is the master of the house gone out,
Or is he in?
Upon the threshold grasses sprout;
The house is just
A bowl of dust:
Is the master of the house gone out,
Or is he in?
When falsehood does infect your flesh
And your heart is a sensuous mesh,
The master of the house
Cannot be in, cannot be in,
Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!†

He makes a very extensive use of elaborate images to produce his effects. A good case of this is the following:

At dusk she tends the parrot cage,
Oils and lights the wick,
and awaits Him —
if a dry leaf stirs,
her all-attentive ears stretch that way —
it is then that his absence
turns with sharpest fear
When the saints of Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama
    arrived at the door and called,
She felt overjoyed!

There is another vacana in which god's just management of the world is worked out in the elaborate image of a trader selling merchandise.

It runs:

Setting up a large shop on the earth,
Our Mahādēvaśeṭṭi, the merchant, sits.
He speaks at once if your mind is one;
He doesn't at all if your mind is in two.
He does not lose a single pie,
Nor earns too even half a pie...
Befold, O Mother, how wise he is,
Our Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama! †

His word-pictures display how with economy, maximum visual impact may be produced. A few crucial strokes of the brush, and the picture is ready! See, for instance, how he gives a picture of old age in the following vacana:

Before the greyness touch your cheek,
Before the wrinkles plough your face,
Before your body dwindles to
A nest of bones;
Before, with teeth all gone,
The back all bowed,
You are a burden to your kin;
Before you prop your legs with hands
And lean heavily upon a staff;
Before the lustre of your manhood fades;
Before you feel the touch of death,
Adore our Lord
Kūḍala Saṅgama! †

Basavaṇṇa's keen eye for detail is something which any painter can envy. The following picture of a ruined pond haunts one's memory:

The pond is filled with the nectar of knowledge
but over it the moss of worldly life covers —
when you try to scoop the water,
the moss spreads too fast again and again
and never lets you reach the water beneath.

It is impossible to convey in English the rich use Basavaṇṇa makes of puns. Suffice it to note here that his punning is not merely decorative but it is poetically central.

VI

Whenever he encounters improper conduct, unethical behaviour and outward pretence, Basavaṇṇa does not hesitate to condemn. Then his language becomes sharp and alive with satirical or ironical shafts. The following vacana explains subtly but in ordinary language with its characteristic rhythm the kind of social manners one should have by describing them obliquely.

Does it make you ugly if you say
'Come right in, how do you do'?
Does your floor cave in when you say
'Do sit down, please'?
Or does your head, or belly, burst
If only you speak to one?
If you have nothing to give, not even a grace,
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama, be sure,
Will pull you down and chop your nose!†

Along with condemnation goes an essential compassion for the victims of his satire. Basavaṇṇa's satirical weapon cuts sharply into superstitious belief in countless deities. This can be seen in the following example:

Gods of lacquer that melt before fire,
They worship! How can I accept them?
How can I accept gods made of valuable metal
that can be sold when money is needed?
How can I accept the gods
Whom we hide underground for the fear of thieves?
Most in accord with our inner feelings,
Most truly the one uniting with us,
Is Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama alone!

Even more wretched deities, Basavaṇṇa, with very effective irony, dismisses as "gods that follow us unwanted." He writes,

Some deities keep guard at ordinary doors,
Some go not when loudly shooed away —
Others are worse than dogs —
They beg and feed on mortals,
How can they give others anything, Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama?

As for the learned and the sophisticated, their position as he satirises it, seems not very different. Of them, he says,

O brothers, ye who dip into a stream,
O masters, ye who dip into a stream,
Renounce, renounce, renounce
Relations with another's wife;
Renounce
The lusting for another's goods!
For if you dip into a stream
Without renouncing these,
'Twill be as dipping into a stream
That has run dry,
O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord! †

Like all great satire, Basavaṇṇa's is not merely negative and destructive. It always carries an undercurrent of sympathy for the victims of whatever he condemns. There are two vacanas, one which is addressed to a goat that is to be sacrificed and another in which the utter futility of following merely worldly goals is satirised, which exemplify this quality:

Cry, cry, O goat,
Because you're slain
For words about words!

Cry, cry, before them
That read the Vedas!

Cry, cry, before them
That hear the Śāstras!

Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama
Will take a fit toll
For what you've wept. †

Brothers, you strut upon an elephant,
Or preen yourselves upon a horse,
Or flaunt in saffron and in musk:
And yet, alas! as you go around,
You're ignorant of the Truth.
You have forgot to sow and grow
The fruit of Virtue!
Mounted upon the crazy elephant

Of your gigantic pride,
You're riding straight
Into the snare of Doom!
Not knowing our Lord
Kūḍala Saṅgama, you only qualify
For hell! †

Though Basavaṇṇa's writing presents a balance between intellect and emotion generally, whenever his devotional feelings mount, this balance is tilted in favour of emotion. In the following vacana, he describes the state of mind fed up with worldly turmoil:

Alas! alas! O Śiva, there is
No pity in you!
Alas! alas! O Śiva, there is
No mercy in you!
Why did you give me birth,
To travail on this earth,
A stranger unto Heaven?
Why did you give me birth?
Hear me, Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama,
Could you not well have made
A tree or bush instead? †

The following lines seek to condemn the wrong approach to God:

If the angry one pours water on God's image,
it is not water but blood!
If the sinner showers flowers on God's image,
it is not flower but a bleeding gash!

While condemning caste distinctions, he writes:

There is one earth to hold
God's temple and the pariah colony;
One water for the closet and the bath;
One sect for those who know themselves;
One meed for those who are released
By means of the sixfold mystic way;
One height for those who know Thee, Lord
Kūḍala Saṅgama!†

When the emotional temperature comes down, his thoughts become

placid and his words limpid. The words below show this:

> Your sight is limitless bliss,
> Your union is even higher joy —
> The roots of my countless bodily hair
> turned each an eye for me to see —
> Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama, seeing you intently,
> my heart has been roused to lover's passion
> and all my flesh stood tingling!

His poetical power can deal with a wide-ranging theme and focus it on to a sharp, central point. An example of this is:

> Thy wideness is the wideness of the world,
> The wideness of the firmament,
> Ay, wider still.
> Thy feet are deeper than the underworld,
> Ay, deeper still.
> Thy crown is higher than Brahma's Egg,
> Ay, higher still.
> Thou Liṅga, who art imperceptible,
> Past understanding and beyond compare,
> Didst shrink to the dimensions of a speck
> When coming to my palm,
> O Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord!†

VII

Though the vacanas some time display formal metrical pattern, their essential music is the music of speech rhythm — the natural rhythm of emotion. Indeed, his verse anticipates centuries ahead the modern mode of "verse libre." We refrain from giving examples for the simple reason that the music of one language cannot be communicated in another. At this point it may be repeated that it is highly misleading to regard "vacana" as either prose-poetry or rhythmic prose. It is a *sui generis* and it has a niche of its own in the vast mansion of Kannaḍa literature.

Basavaṇṇa's vacanas abound in aphorisms which are gathered from the depths of his personal experience. These are not incidental, for they add to the total effect of vacanas. One example can be

given, in which he describes how outward opportunities cannot modify the essential pattern of things:

Of what avail the fortune-line
Without the line of life?
Of what avail the weapon[8] of the Moon
In a coward's hands?
Of what avail the looking-glass
In a blind man's hands?
Of what avail the ruby-stone
In a monkey's hands?
Of what avail the Liṅga
In the hands of those who know not
Kūḍala Saṅga's Śaraṇas,
Unless they know the Śiva Path?†

There are many more which can be detached and used as independent aphorisms. They are concise statements in one or two lines.

Basavaṇṇa's closeness to the common men can be also seen in his extensive use of proverbs. It is also possible that his own verse later acquired the status of proverbs. These are used in such a way as to maximise his artistic effects. These are rich in variety, involving all the traditional figures of speech like simile, oxymoron etc. Some of the vacanas show the quality of drama.

Basavaṇṇa's language is a vast subject by itself, and here only a brief notice can be made of it. Some of the sources he goes to are common language, proverbs etc. He used Sanskrit words and forms most sparingly, and even when he uses them he harmonises them with Kannaḍa so perfectly that they do not jar. Basavaṇṇa's revolution of restoring the living language to its central place in literary expression enabled subsequent poets to liberate themselves from the shackles of stilted poetic diction. Great poets like Harihara and Rāghavāṅka, Kumāra Vyāsa, Ratnākara Varṇi and Sarvajña, benefited substantially in this regard. They could fertilise their language with spoken words.

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8 The original expression 'Candrāyudha' means the crescent shaped battle-sword in the armoury of a hero.

If analysed separately, most vacanas turn out to be independent artistic entities. They are, in fact, lyrics in their own right. But if they are all studied as one opus, they give us a sense of an epic poem. There is an underlying unity to them, deriving from the intense experience of one highly sensitive and noble soul in this world — this vale of tears! His joys, sorrows, doubts, triumphs and defeats, and eventual spiritual realization, are encompassed in a vast canvas, itself made up of innumerable vacanas. Basavaṇṇa's individuality finds profound fulfilment in his vacanas.

CANNAVEERA KANAVI

The devotee walks the razor's edge, —
a perilous path;
like a quick-moving saw
it cuts both ways, —
there's no respite, none!
As safely play with the snake
as toy with devotion,
O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama!

HISTORICAL PLACES PERTAINING TO BASAVĒŚVARA

Places connected with important events in the lives of great men exercise profound influence on men and women of succeeding generations. If the great men happen to be religious leaders or saints of spiritual eminence, the influence becomes deeper and pervasive, particularly in a country like India.

Basavēśvara was one of the great religious leaders and social reformers of Karnāṭak. He lived in the 12th century. During his lifetime he must have come into contact with a good number of places, where he might have stayed for days or lived for years. Some of these places might have been holy places or centres of pilgrimage. Unfortunately we have little information about them all.

However, from epigraphical and literary sources, we know at least of four places where Basavēśvara spent long years of his most eventful life. All of them are highly interesting, not only on account of this teacher's historic associations with them, but also because they had attained historical importance even before his contacts with them. If we conduct historical investigation concerning them and closely study their antiquities with an archaeological insight, we can collect a volume of information that would be useful for historical interpretation of some aspects of his life and personality. The places are Bāgevāḍi, Saṅgamēśvara, Maṅgaḷavēḍhe and Kalyāṇa. We shall deal with them one by one indicating their significance in the study of Basavēśvara's life.

Bāgevāḍi and Iṅgaḷēśvara:

Absolutely no doubts need be entertained in respect of Bāgevāḍi being the birth-place of Basavēśvara. The fact of its being so is positively established by epigraphical as well as literary sources. The Arjunvāḍ inscription is certain on this point and the evidence is supported by the *Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe* and the Telugu *Basavapurāṇamu*. Bāgevāḍi is now the headquarters of the Taluka bearing the name in Bijapur district. It is popularly called *Basavana* Bāgevāḍi, reminiscent of its ancient association with Basavēśvara.

About six miles from Bāgevāḍi lies a village, formerly a prosperous town, called Iṅgaḷēśvara. This place appears to have been more prominent and better known than Bāgevādi in the twelfth century. This might be due, in the first instance, to the fact of its being a stronghold of Jainism which was a predominant faith, a few centuries earlier when Śaivism did not enjoy a favoured position. In the Jaina terminology a line of teachers who hailed from this place is mentioned as Iṅgaḷēśvara Baḷi. Jaina relics and inscriptions referring to Jaina teachers and devotees are found here. About a mile from the village is situated a laterite cave in the hill, containing an image, in *siddhāsana* posture, of Rēṇukācārya or Rēvaṇasiddha who propagated Śaivism before the advent of Basavēśvara. In this cave is also found a standing image of Pārśvanātha Jina and his lion pedestal, placed at a distance. The famous Kannaḍa poet, Aggaḷa, who was a Jaina, wrote his *Candraprabhāpurāṇa* at Iṅgaḷēśvara in 1189 A.D.

Iṅgaḷēśvara:

Iṅgaḷēśvara was also a flourishing educational centre with a considerable Brāhmaṇa population and possessed splendid temples and shrines dedicated to Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava deities, some of which have survived to the present day. Mention may be made in this connection of the temples of Kalmēśvara, Sōmēśvara, Śobhanēśvara and Nārāyaṇa. The image of Nārāyaṇa is exquisitely carved, being an excellent specimen of sculptural art. Epigraphs of the place describe this as an eminent *agrahāra* which was administered by five hundred learned Mahājanas. The *agrahāra* is said to have been

created in the hoary past by the epic king Janamejaya. It is eulogized as Kāśi of Karnāṭa and Dakṣiṇa Vāraṇāsi.

It is usual to introduce to a less distinguished village or town with reference to a more renowned city in the neighbourhood. In keeping with this practice, Bāgevāḍi which was not so well known as Iṅgaḷēśvara at that time was called Iṅgaḷēśvara-Bāgevāḍi near Iṅgaḷēśvara. The earliest literary mention of Bāgevāḍi with this prefix is found in the Telugu *Basavapurāṇamu* of Pālkurike Sōmanātha who styles it Hiṅguḷēśvara-Bhagavati. The same is named in the Kannaḍa *Basavapurāṇa* of Bhīma Kavi (1369 A.D.) as Iṅgaḷēśvara-Bāgevāḍi. Thus it becomes clear that Bāgevāḍi was the place where Basavēśvara was born and Iṅgaḷēśvara was in no way connected with this event. One cannot be born in two places.

However, in course of time, the original significance of this twin name was forgotten by the later generations. Through frequent Purāṇic recitations the twin place-name became universally familiar and the people thought that both Iṅgaḷēśvara and Bāgevāḍi were associated with the event of Basavēśvara's birth. Consequently, superstition and popular imagination invented tales and legends connecting Iṅgaḷēśvara with Basavēśvara's birth. For instance, at Iṅgaḷēśvara a dilapidated well called Hālabhāvi (milk-well) is said to be the spot where Basavēśvara's pregnant mother vomited. Besides the cave of Rēṇukācārya, two more caves associated with the names of Akka Nāgamma, Basavēśvara's elder sister, and her illustrious son Cannabasavaṇṇa have been located in the same hill. Near about is traced a site called Hōriya Moraḍi where Basavēśvara's birth is alleged to have actually taken place. All such stories bear no relation to truth. It is noticed that in some manuscripts of the *Basavapurāṇa*, Iṅgaḷēśvara is mentioned as the place of birth of Basavēśvara (Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. I, Part II, p. 478, n. 2).

Though Basavēśvara was not born at Iṅgaḷēśvara, he appears to have visited the place in his childhood, as it is situated close in the neighbourhood of Bāgevāḍi. He might have derived his first-hand knowledge of Jainism and the practices of its followers early in his life at this place. This is supported by his vacanas, or

Sayings, in which he ridicules this faith and its odd practices like nudity.

Bāgevāḍi:

Adverting to Bāgevāḍi, the ancient relics are not many. There exists an old Śaiva shrine in a ruined state. A fairly old, but not very old, well is associated with Basavēśvara who is said to have performed the miracle in his childhood of reviving his play-mate who was drowned in it. Basavēśvara, again, is said to have been born in a house which is pointed out to the visitors and wherein the so-called descendants of his family were living till recently. We have no means to verify these stories which appear to be late and legendary.

We leave the legend behind and proceed to explore the authentic historical material available in the form of one monument of the Cālukyan time and a few trustworthy epigraphs of the period. These sources do not directly focus historical light on the life of Basavēśvara. Still we consider them of much value, because, they provide circumstantial evidence in our study of his age and personality.

The modern Basavēśvara temple at Bāgewāḍi is an extensive monument renovated and enlarged to suit the requirements of the present time. The early nucleus, however, is mostly preserved in its essential form inside this monument. The original temple appears to have been constructed in about the eleventh century on the grand pattern of the classical Cālukyan style of architecture. Subsequently, this seems to have undergone more than one renovations. In its early phase, the temple was dedicated to Śiva in the form of a Liṅga with Nandi in front. The interior halls, or *maṇṭapas*, the carved pillars supporting them and the entrance door with the figure of Gajalakṣmī carved on the lintel, stand testimony to the Cālukyan model. The internal ceiling of the central hall is decorated with the elegantly carved figures of Naṭarāja in the middle, surrounded by the Dikpālas or guardians of the eight quarters. The present Nandi identified with Basavēśvara, appears to have been later moved to a distance; it is now prominently worshipped in the attached shrine. It is not unlikely that the image of Nandi, as it exists today, is a

later substitute. *Gopuras* of artistic designs and constructions adorn the crests of the shrines of the main temple.

In all, eleven inscriptions have been discovered at Bāgevāḍi. Three of them were recently copied by the present writer during his visit to the town. Excluding some five of them which are casual and scrappy, the remaining six are fairly important, furnishing a good deal of information about the political, social and religious state of affairs at Bāgevāḍi in the eleventh and the twelfth centuries.

The earliest record, dated 1049 A.D., refers to the five hundred Mahājanas of Bāgevāḍi. The next, dated 1152 A.D., is of the time of the Cālukya king Taila III, when Basavēśvara was living, though he is not mentioned in the epigraph. The inscription speaks of a rent free endowment made to Divākara Bhaṭṭopādhyāya. Another record, dated 1169 A.D., in the reign of the Kalacuri king Sōvidēva, son of Bijjaḷa, registers gifts to the god Mallikārjuna of the eminent *agrahāra* town of Bāgevāḍi. The deity Gauredēva is also mentioned in the epigraph. The fourth one of 1170 A.D., belonging to the same king, narrates a gift of land to the temples of Sōmanātha and Canna-kēśava, constructed by *Rājādhyakṣa* Rēvaṇayya Nāyaka, the *Sēnabōva* of the chief queen Sōvaladēvi, wife of Sōvidēva, evidently. Bāgevāḍi is described here as the crest jewel among the *agrahāras* and its five hundred Mahājanas are praised for their learning and scholarship. The epigraph refers to another temple of Bakulēśvara. The fifth inscription, dated 1178 A.D., registering a gift to the god Bontēśvara, belongs to the reign of the Kalacuri king Saṅkama. The last one, bearing the date 1198 A.D., refers itself to the reign of Jaitrapāla, the Yādava king of Dēvagiri. It registers gifts to the god Bontēśvara. In this connection mention is made of an official named *Dēsiya Daṇḍanāyaka* Madhuvarasayya.

The inscriptions noticed above apparently furnish no information about Basavēśvara. However, they let in useful side light about the age in which he lived and the region and locality where he was born and spent the early years of his childhood. This is quite interesting and of much value for forming an estimate of his personality. To put it briefly, the epigraphs reveal the following position.

By the time of the twelfth century, Bāgevāḍi had grown into an excellent and top ranking *agrahāra* town as a result of the royal patronage and progressive activities of its educated residents. A self-contained unit, it was administered by the local representatives, the five hundred learned Mahājanas. State officials in high positions like *Rājādhyakṣa* Rēvaṇayya Nāyaka took interest in its development and contributed to its prosperity. Existence of the temples dedicated to the following gods, is disclosed by the epigraphs: Mallikārjuna, Sōmanātha, Cannakēśava, Bakulēśvara, Bontēśvara and Gauredēva. These temples were ably managed by the priests and teachers of the Pāśupata Śaiva sect. None of the temples have survived; and not even their traces are available today. The names of the deities also are unheard of.

More Agrahāras:

Besides Iṅgaḷēśvara and Bāgevāḍi, the region of Bāgevāḍi contained within short distances a good number of other agrahāras which were also strongholds of Brāhmaṇas and centres of traditional learning. Some of these may be noted here:—Muttage (Muttigi), Maṇigavaḷḷi (Managōḷi), Ēlāpura (Yaḷvār), Kōlār (Kolhār). These were severally under the management of hundreds of Mahājanas. The *agrahāras* were adorned with temples dedicated to Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and other deities. Some temples had maṭhas, or monasteries, attached to them. The priests and preceptors who exercised control over these religious establishments commonly belonged to the Pāśupata sect of Śaivism.

Basava's Birth and Boyhood

Such was the general atmosphere in which Basavēśvara was born. He was brought up in this environment saturated with Brahmanic traditions. His was a revolutionary mind which did not acquiesce in the old order of things. The dynamic spirit that was developing in him was never cowed down and suppressed under the weight of time honoured traditions and conventions of the society and dogmas and practices of the orthodox religion. On the contrary, it reacted, enquired and rebelled.

His parents were Mādirāja and Mādalambe. The family consisted of at least two elder children, one a girl named Nāgamma and another a boy named Dēvarāja. The child was named Basava or Basavarāja. Basava is a Kannḍa form of Sanskrit Vṛṣabha, the Divine Bull who is the *vāhana*, or vehicle, of god Śiva. Śaivism being the predominant faith in that age, the name Basava was fairly common among its followers and in that area.

Basava's father Mādirāja was the president of the assembly of five hundred elders or representatives of the *agrahāra* town of Bāgevāḍi. He was the mayor and chief administrative officer, in modern parlance, who looked after the multifarious affairs of the township. His status was thus more than that of a commoner and,therefore, aristocratic so to say.

A Turning Point:

When Basava was about eight years old, his Brāhmaṇa father according to the time honoured custom of his community, had his son's *Upanayana*, or initiation, ceremony celebrated with the usual pomp and eclat. Basava was made to wear the sacred thread, recite the mystic syllables called *Gāyatri* and worship the holy fire in the altar, along with a complex of other rites. Soon after this ceremony Basava's parents expired and he was brought up by his aged grandmother.

It was a turning point in the life of Basava. The Brahmanical religion and teachings made no impression on him who was ever sincere, sensitive and thoughtful. The *Upanayana* ceremony and its subsequent observances did in no way edify him, because they were administered to him in a rigid, mechanical procedure by persons who had no true insight. On the contrary, it created a sense of repulsion for the religious faith and its traditions whose symbol it was. It aroused in him the latent spirit of revolt which was directed against the Brahmanical dogmas and ritualism.

According to the *Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe* of Harihara, Basava, at the age of about sixteen years, discarded the sacred thread called *Jannivāra* or *Yajñopavīta* which marked the allegiance and affiliation

to Brahmanical order. He broke away from the religious traditions and social bonds. He renounced affection and attachment for the family and left his ancestral home once for all in search of light. Prompted by an inner urge, he proceeded to Kūḍala Saṅgama or Saṅgama, a Śaivite stronghold and pilgrims' centre, to which he was attracted on account of its sanctity and seclusion.

Before entering into the details of Basava's contact with this place, we shall have a peep at it in its present position, exploring and studying its antiquities.

Saṅgama:

Saṅgama or Kūḍala Saṅgama is now a village in the Hungund taluka of Bijapur district. The name connotes a confluence and the place is situated at the junction of the two rivers, the Kṛṣṇā with its tributary the Malaprabhā. The Kannaḍa prefix *Kūḍala* also means confluence. The village Saṅgama is situated about a furlong away from the confluence. But the temple of Saṅgamēśvara is erected just on the brow of the confluence itself. The site of the confluence below is graced with a modest *maṇṭapa* with a *Liṅga* installed in it. Saṅgama is renowned as a great *Tīrtha*, or sacred place, profoundly sacred, being visited by thousands of pilgrims all round the year. Its sanctity has been augmented by its later association with Basavēśvara who chose this place for his austerities, spiritual elevation and final beatitude.

The Saṅgamēśvara temple is of about the eleventh century and presents an interesting spectacle with its artistic and epigraphical treasures. In the sanctuary, Saṅgamēśvara is seen in the form of a coarse Liṅga of moderate size and stature. A mark on its top is shown as the spot through which Basavēśvara is said to have merged with the Infinite. Noteworthy among the images set up near about are the figures of ascetics and a deity with eight arms. The pedestal of a Sūrya image containing a row of seven horses and the charioteer Aruṇa, is improvised to provide a base for the later images set up on it. This shows that, as in many other places, a shrine dedicated to the Sun-God existed in the vicinity several centuries ago. The

original Saṅgamēśvara temple appears to have been built in the Cālukyan style of architecture comprising the sanctuary or *garbhagṛha*, the adjoining antechamber or *antarāḷa* and the main hall or *mahā-maṇṭapa*. These are preserved almost intact to the present day. The pillars in the main hall are massive, carved with decorative designs. The superstructure with the row of tapering uneven *gopuras* must have been imposed at a later date when the temple was renovated.

The lintel of the main entrance bears the figure of Gajalakṣmī. It abuts on a verandah with a stone railing, carved with relief sculptures depicting interesting scenes of religious and secular life. In the facing compound wall are fixed odd pieces of sculptures and images, like the hero-stones, the Saptamātrikas, Gaṇeśa, etc. Most of the ancient relics of Saṅgama are found in a damaged and mutilated condition. It is likely, a good number have been destroyed and wiped out of existence.

Within the precincts of the Saṅgamēśvara temple were discovered four inscriptions, one of which was copied by me during my recent visit to the place (1965). It is much damaged and worn out. The epigraph is of the time of the Cālukya king Taila III who was a contemporary of Basavēśvara. Bijjaḷa figures in this record probably as a donor of gift to the temple. The second epigraph which is fragmentary, could be assigned to 1158 A.D. Judging from the figure of Viṣṇu carved at the top, this record appears to have been set up with reference to a gift registered in favour of a Vaiṣṇava deity.

The next two epigraphs furnish more interesting information. One, dated 1160 A.D., registers gifts of land, flower-garden, shop and oil-mill to the gods Kāḷēśvara and Āchēśvara by Cuñcina Ādi-seṭṭi and *Aivattokkalu* oil-merchants. It describes the Mahājanas of Kūḍala Kappaḍi Saṅgama as devotees of the god Saṅgamēśvara and reputed for their scholarship. Kūḍala Saṅgama is stated to have been a primeval *Brahmapuri*, or colony of learned Brāhmaṇas, founded by emperors. It was a *sarvanamasyada* (i.e., entirely con-secrated) *agrahāra*. The above named god Āchēśvara stood installed on the sacred site of Malahāri, *i.e.*, Malaprabhā. The other record

of 1213 A.D., of the reign of Siṅghaṇa, the Yādhava king of Dēvagiri, registers gifts to the same god Āchēśvara on the Malahāri.

Excepting the last one, all the three inscriptions noted above belong to the times when Basavēśvara was living, though not at Saṅgama itself.

With the help of the above study we can draw a historical sketch of Saṅgama as follows: in the age of Basavēśvara, Saṅgama was an eminent religious centre renowned for its sanctity and scholarship. It was called Kūḍala Kappaḍi Saṅgama. This name split up in two ways, is often mentioned as *Kūḍala* Saṅgama and Kappaḍi Saṅgama. *Kūḍala* and *Saṅgama* are synonymous terms, the former being Kannaḍa and the latter Sanskrit. *Kappaḍi* is derived from Sanskrit *karpaṭi*, meaning a religious mendicant in patched or ragged clothes (*karpaṭa*). This expression is illuminating as it points to the fact that this holy place was incessantly visited and inhabited by ascetics and religious mendicants engaged in asusterities for generations in the past.

Saṅgama comprised a centre of education, an *agrahāra* town of considerable importance. It was under the management of more than a hundred Mahājanas who were heads of distinguished Brāhmaṇa families. These Mahājanas were noted for their learning, scholarly pursuits and religious observances. They belonged to the Kāḷāmukha or Pāśupata Śaiva sect. The presiding deity of the holy place was Saṅgamanātha or Saṅgamēśvara whose temple, as described above, has survived to the present day. There were several other temples, some of which could be named. These were Āchēśvara on the bank of the Malaprabhā, Kāḷēśvara, one Vaiṣṇava temple and another a Sūrya temple. Āchēśvara appears to have been a famous deity next to Saṅgamēśvara. He is described as Śiva, Śaṁbhu and Rudra. These gods received gifts from the devotees who hailed from different places and were engaged in various avocations. The Saṅgama town seems to have been extensive, starting from the confluence of the rivers and spreading right up to the present village and beyond. Vestiges of old habitation are traceable round about.

Basava's Stay at Saṅgama:

Saṅgama was an ideal place to his liking, where Basava could pursue his cherished objective. Nature and God, all pervasive and infinite, had joined hands to elevate it from the circumscribed sphere of the mundane world. Here he could breathe freely, think freely and act freely. He could experience and enjoy the presence of the Almighty in the form of Saṅgamēśvara who was a perennial fountain of inspiration. He was accessible to the devotees, one and all, without the distinctions of castes and creeds, the high and the low.

As Saṅgama was an *agrahāra*, the youth could also derive the benefits of good education and sound scholarship by establishing contacts with the learned Brāhmaṇas of the place, who were, perhaps, on account of its being a cosmopolitan centre of pilgrimage, less orthodox in the social and religious affairs. He could also meet here the wise and holy men who came from various places and regions and gain vast experience of the world, of god and men.

At Saṅgama, Basava had the good fortune of securing as his guide and preceptor Īśānya Guru who was a great devotee of Śiva, a divine of deep insight and a well read scholar of catholic views. He at once found in this budding youth the promise of an extraordinary career. He persuaded Basava to settle at the holy place assuring him of the necessary facilities. Nothing could have been dearer to his heart than this. Thus commenced the evolutionary process in Basava's life. The name of Basava's preceptor, according to other literary works, was Jātavēda Muni.

Basava plunged himself in a course of study, austerities and devotion. All his attention and activities were focussed on Saṅgamēśvara, the supreme god who was all in all to him. Absorbed in meditation, he engaged himself constantly in the worship and service of this deity. Oft and on he studied the sacred works, conferred with the learned men and discussed the problems staring at him. As Basava was endowed with uncommon intuition and genius, it did not take much time for him to acquire proficiency in secular lores and religious and philosophical literature of different schools.

Simultaneously, he advanced in spiritual exercises and progressed in mystic experiences.

Vision of the Future:

Basava would have spent about twelve years at Saṅgama. This was most profitable period of his life when his ideas matured and actions tended to become resolute. He saw the vision of his future life. He was not an idle philosopher and pious thinker. Impulsive and emotional, he was a man of action, dynamic and determined. His revolutionary mind sought channels to transform the ideas and ideals into deeds.

By the end of the preparatory stage of his life Basava appears to have come to the following conclusions in regard to the aim and mission of his life. These were two fold, spiritual attainment and religious and social reform.

1. There is one god, real, universal and supreme. He is perfect, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He is noble, sublime and compassionate, ever disposed to help the true devotee. He manifests himself in various forms and aspects. No other god or deity could attain His dignity. He is Śiva, commonly worshipped in the form of a *Liṅga* which is a symbol of infinity, light transcendental. As Śiva revealed himself to Basava and blessed him with his infinite grace, assuming the name and form of Saṅgamanātha of Kūḍala Saṅgama, Saṅgamanātha became his personal and specially cherished god.

2. To dedicate his life and soul for the worship and service of this god was his life's mission; to experience his presence and to commune with Him was his life's supreme goal. The true devotees of Śiva, the Jaṅgamas, the selfless itinerant mendicants who propagated his gospel also deserved highest respect and unstinted service. The erring humanity who went astray in pursuit of unreal gods and false faiths, should be brought on the right path of real god and true religion.

3. The existing social order based on artificial distinctions and discriminations, was the cause of many an ill and suffering. Hence it needed drastic reform. The social reform thus contemplated

could be achieved by inculcating true faith in and devotion to Śiva. All who were endowed with this qualification were equal without the distinction of caste, creed, sex, birth or status in life.

At Cross-roads:

Basava had attained the prime of youth and stood at the threshold of life. His stay at Saṅgama had completely transformed his being. When he entered this sanctuary he was a stripling, goaded by a feeling of discontent and spirit of revolt, perplexed by a host of insoluble problems which impeded his path of life.

But, now, by the infinite grace of the Divine Lord Saṅgamēśvara he was able to overcome the obstacles and see his way through. He had emerged as a self-conscious personality instilled with a new faith and inspired by a new ideal, confident of achieving his life's goal.

Still he was at cross-roads. He was to select one of the two paths that lay ahead of him. Being spiritually minded, his goal of life was god-realisation. His devotion to the Lord was all-absorbing, intensive and overwhelming; he pined for Him, he yearned for Him. If permitted, he would have chosen to remain at Saṅgama permanently and applied himself more and more steadfastly to achieve his objective. But this was not to be. Neither his Lord willed it, nor his compassionate nature would allow it.

He had seen enough of the humanity that lived around. He had experienced the ills of the society wherein he was born. They were all groping in darkness, unable to perceive the true path. His Lord had kindled light in his heart and conferred vision on him. Was it not his duty to hold this spiritual lamp in the open and lead the erring wayfarers in the right direction? The consciousness of this social obligation weighed heavily on the mind of youth Basava.

Thus there was a conflict of ideals: a life solely dedicated to spiritual attainments or a life devoted to the service of humanity. Basava wavered. But there was a third course in which the two could be harmonized. Basava could not see this clearly in the beginning, though he realised it soon after. But Saṅgamēśvara, his guiding spirit, knew how to shape his destiny.

There were inner promptings, frequent and imperative. The wide world was calling him. He should throw himself in the midst of the world, full of stress and turmoil, wherein his fellow-beings were toiling and struggling, folk ignorant and superstitious, devoid of light and guidance. He repeatedly prayed and implored his Lord to allow him to continue in His blissful presence. But He impelled him to worldly action and urged him to fulfil what He had ordained as his life's mission. So Basava had to leave Saṅgama and take leave of his Lord with a heavy heart.

Departure to Maṅgaḷavāḍa:

Which was his next destination? Where was he to go and start his worldly career? "Maṅgaḷavāḍa" came the divine injunction.

At this time Bijjaḷa of Kalacuri dynasty was a rising star on the political horizon. He had commenced his career as a Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara or, provincial governor, in circa 1130 A.D. Though he belonged to a subordinate family of feudatory chiefs, he was wielding considerable power in the Cālukya empire by virtue of his family ties with the imperial house and his own ability and enterprising nature. His capital town was Maṅgaḷavāḍa, modern Maṅgaḷawēḍhe near Paṇḍharpur in Mahārāshtra state. This was considered a fitting place for a youth to start his worldly career and Basava was persuaded to go there. Thus he left Saṅgama for Maṅgaḷavāḍa.

The above account of Basava's stay at Saṅgama and his departure therefrom to Maṅgaḷavāḍa is primarily based on Harihara's narration in the *Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe*. This further receives support from the epigraphical sources which furnish many details about Bijjaḷa's family and his political career. They may be briefly summed up here.

Maṅgaḷavāḍa, the Kalacuri Capital:

Bijjaḷa belonged to the Kalacuri house which originally hailed from central India. An early ancestor of this family was Ucita who migrated to the south and settled at Maṅgaḷavāḍa in the northern part of Karnāṭak about the first quarter of the tenth century. In the time of Bijjaḷa I, who was the fourth descendant from Ucita and of the former's son Krishna or Kannama, the family earned the status

of feudatory governors under the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa. This status was enhanced in the period of Jōgama, son of Kannama, who gave his daughter in marriage to the illustrious Cālukya emperor Vikramāditya VI. Jōgama's son Permāḍi appears to have taken the hand of Vikramāditya's daughter in marriage. Their son was the reputed Bijjaḷa II.

Maṅgaḷavāḍa means an abode of good. This was an ancient place which was also called Maṅgaḷivēḍa. It was the capital of all the rulers of this Kalacuri family including Bijjaḷa II who started his career as Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara, or provincial ruler, under the Cālukyas. Inscriptions of the period make it abundantly clear that Bijjaḷa's centre of activities for over two decades during his subordinate position as a feudatory ruler was Maṅgaḷavāḍa. No doubt, it is quite plausible that he was now and then visiting the Cālukya capital Kalyāṇa on account of his family ties and political interest. Thus, roughly from 1130 A.D. to 1156 A.D., Bijjaḷa was stationed at Maṅgaḷavāḍa only, which was his official headquarters and the ancestral seat of his family. About 1156 A.D. when Bijjaḷa almost succeeded in usurping the Cālukya sovereignty and declared his independence, he might have transferred his seat of power and residence from Maṅgaḷavāḍa to Kalyāṇa. Placed under this menacing situation, the Cālukya king Taila III was preparing to abandon Kalyāṇa and seeking protection in a safer place. In 1162 A.D. Bijjaḷa ousted his Cālukya overlord once for all and forcibly occupied his throne.

In this manner the Kalacuri power was established at Kalyāṇa and Bijjaḷa, the usurper, ruled from this city over a major portion of the former Cālukya empire for about six years from 1162 to 1167 A.D. The above account drawn with the help of authentic contemporary epigraphs, emphasizes the fact that the period of Bijjaḷa's rule as king and sovereign from the capital city of Kalyāṇa was limited to the short span of about six years only from 1162 to 1167 A.D. During all the earlier period of his feudatory career Bijjaḷa's official headquarters was only at Maṅgaḷavāḍa.

With the help of this firm historical data, if we examine the

Vīraśaiva literary sources, we find that Harihara's account of Basavēśvara's early life and rise in career is unchallengeably historical. It is only this author who narrates that from Saṅgama, Basava went to Maṅgaḷavāḍa where Bijjaḷa was ruling. The circumstantial details of Basava's rise in his court from an humble post of junior accountant to the high office of the Treasury Chief, also designated as General and Minister, appear to be true to history. In contrast, almost all the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas totally exclude Maṅgaḷavāḍa from their account of Basavēśvara and describe the main events in the life of this teacher as having taken place at Kalyāṇa only. This has to be historically discounted.

Antiquities of Maṅgaḷavēdhe:

With the background of the above historical study, we proceed to modern Maṅgaḷavēḍhe to survey its archaeological remains and find out how far they help us in our investigation and enquiry. Maṅgaḷavēḍhe is at present situated in the Paṇḍharpur taluka of Sholapur district in Maharashtra State. It is about twelve miles from Paṇḍharpur. Although a Marathi area now, there is incontrovertible evidence to show that like Lātur, the home of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas in Usmānābād district, and a good many other outlying tracts, Maṅgaḷavēḍhe formed an integral part of Karnāṭak until the fifteenth century. A few instances may be cited in support of this.

The earlier name of Paṇḍharpur was Paṇḍaraṅge, a Kannaḍa form, which is mentioned in a Sanskrit-cum-Kannaḍa inscription of Hoysaḷa Sōmēśvara, dated 1236 A.D., found in the Viṭṭhala temple here. The poet Cauṇḍarasa (c. 1300), author of the Kannaḍa *Abhinava-dasakumārcarita*, was associated with Paṇḍharpur. The Maharashtrian saints like Tukārām have explicityly stated that the god Viṭṭhala of Paṇḍharpur belonged to the Kannaḍa region and nurtured in Kannaḍa environment. Mācanūr or Māsanūr which was the capital of Bijjaḷa's son, Mallikārjuna, and figures in Kannaḍa literature and inscriptions is about eight miles from Maṅgaḷavēḍhe.

An investigation into the geographical periphery and cultural sphere of Karnāṭak in the historic past has revealed the fact that its

boundaries stretched far beyond their present positions and that they have considerably shrunk in dimensions on account of territorial encroachments on account of political crises and social calamities during the later centuries. One such affected region of former Karnāṭaka is Maṅgaḷavēdhe.

Here is a picture of an antiquarian's researches at Maṅgaḷavēḍhe. The tract is favoured by Nature; the soil is rich and fertile; it is a vast even plain stretching miles around. This feature, according to a local legend, is the effect of the massive mace of the epic warrior Bhima, which is said to have moved flattening the terrain around. A small river called Māna flows near the town. There existed a shrine dedicated to the Goddess Maṅgaladēvi, the presiding deity of the place. This was destroyed and *dargah* built in its place in the Muslim rule.

Large numbers of ruins are scattered in different places. These comprise remains of temples of artistic construction, constituting pillars, door jams, lintels and other parts, pedestals of images and sculptures of deities, some in a preserved state, some partly preserved and some fragmentary and mutilated, and in addition, a few inscriptions. They show that a good number of temples constructed in the ornate Cālukyan style of architectures, tastefully decorated and gracefully adorned with beautiful sculptures, had come into existence and flourished in this town during the period from the tenth to the twelfth centuries. These temples belonged to various faiths, Jaina, Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Śākta. Noteworthy among the images and sculptures of different cults are the following few: Pārśvanāth and other Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras in standing and sitting postures, Naṭarāja, Bhairava, Durgā, Mahiṣāsuramardinī and Viṣṇu. Of particular interest are the sculptures of Brahma with four hands and Śiva-Pārvati, Śiva bearing five faces and ten hands. Memorial stones set up in honour of heroes and *Satis* (devout wives), which, are commonly found in many parts of Karnāṭak, were also noticed here.

As for the epigraphs, it is a deplorable story. The reports show that, till recently, a good number of inscriptions existed here. But

most of them have disappeared on account of wanton destruction carried on by the hostile elements and the ignorant folk. According to one typical report, large slabs of inscribed stone were used for the foundations of a hall in a *dargah*. Two of the inscriptions belonging to this place, were lying in fields far away from the town. The existence of inscriptions in the round about villages was reported.

Seven Kannaḍa inscriptions were collected at Maṅgaḷavēḍhe. Two of them are of the times of Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara Jōgamarasa and Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara Kannapayya, who were grand-father and great-grand-father respectively of the Kalacuri usurper Bijjaḷa. Pérgaḍe Devarasa, a subordinate of Jōgamarasa is mentioned in one. An epigraph of 1115 A.D. is engraved in beautiful Kannaḍa. An interesting Kannaḍa expression *Kanvāḷeya Teṁkaṇēri* is met with in one record. One record belongs to the Seuṇa Singhana II. The epigraphs reveal the existence of the temples dedicated to the gods, Bhōgēśvara, Sāmantakēśvara, Nārāyaṇa and Gōpatīśvara in the eleventh century. No trace of them is left at present. Among the survivals of Kannaḍa may be noted a number of Kannaḍa speaking Vīraśaiva families in Śanivāra Peth. In the name Hona-mane of a field, we can detect the Kannaḍa original *honnumānya*.

The extant temples at Maṅgaḷaveḍhe belong to the late and modern period when the area came under the impact of Maratha and Muslim cultures. Among such, mention may be made of the shrines of Dāmāji, Tukāyi, Khaṇḍobā etc., besides mosques and *dargahs*. The temple of Kāśī Viśveśvara is an early monument of architectural excellence renovated later in the sixteenth century with a Marathi inscription engraved in it.

This town is hallowed by its association with many a scholar and saint of Karnāṭaka and Maharashtra. Jayatīrtha, the great exponent of Madhvācārya's philosophy (14th century) hailed from this place. A temple erected in honour of Gahinīnātha, a famous teacher of the Nātha school existed here. Dāmāji, Kānho Pātrā, Cokhā Meḷā and Akkalakoṭ Mahārāja had their contacts with this place.

The above account is based on the archaeologial and other

materials collected by me in the course of my exploration and study tour to this place in 1941. The Kannaḍa inscriptions referred to here have not been published.

The above account may be supplemented by a few more details gathered from other sources. According to Harihara's *Rēvaṇa-siddhēśvara Ragaḷe*, Rēvaṇasiddha, a renowned Śaiva teacher, stayed at Maṅgaḷavāḍa and Māsanūr for a considerable time. Rēvaṇa-siddha's son, Rudramuni, a famous Vīraśaiva saint, is said to have been born at Siddhanakere near Maṅgaḷavāḍa. A temple dedicated to Rēvaṇasiddha is situated at Maṅgaḷavāḍa. The priest of the temple is a Vīraśaiva. Reference has been made to the followers of Vīraśaiva faith residing in this town. Some vague traditions seem to have preserved the memory of Bijjaḷa's rule from this capital town.

Basavēśvara lived at Maṅgaḷavēḍhe upto 1153 A.D. when he rose to a supreme position in the court of Bijjaḷa and made preparations for his social and religious movement, which matured and bore fruit at Kalyāṇa. Though Bijjaḷa's records mentioning Maṅgaḷavāḍa as his capital have been found elsewhere, it is unfortunate that no inscription of Bijjaḷa could be traced at Maṅgaḷavēdhe. This can be explained, as shown above, by the fact of large scale destruction of the antiquities. It is glaring in this context to note that, except for some surviving relics of Kannaḍa culture, no memory of Basavēśvara has lingered on here. This may be due, in the first instance, to the radical transformation in the political and cultural set up of this area from the 14th century onwards, when the old traditions were completely effaced. Secondly, since Basavēśvara's movement took its proper form and developed in vast proportions, creating great commotion soon after at Kalyāṇa, the later event overshadowed and obliterated its earlier track. Further the movement eventually suffered temporary set back and disruption. All these factors pushed this place into the limbo of oblivion. In one place, the Siṅgirājapurāṇa (sandhi vii, verse 46) seems to refer to Basava's early stay at Maṅgaḷavāḍa.

Still there is much scope for an archaeologist to explore and probe into. Here exist ancient sites which, if excavated, are likely to yield historical treasures. Who knows, his spade may turn up new inscriptions and old structures that would throw new light on the Kalacuri regime that prevailed here for about two centuries. It is not unlikely that these investgations might also throw new light on Basavēśvara's early life and activities.

Kalyāṇa:

About 1153 A.D. Basavēśvara appears to have left Maṅgaḷavāḍa for Kalyāṇa. Before making our observations about his stay at this capital city, we shall study its present state, peeping into its past history and exploring its antiquities.

This town is now situated in the Humnābād taluka of Bīdar district in Mysore State. It can be claimed in its favour that it stands out as a great centre of historical importance on account of the fact that it had the privilege of becoming the capital city of the extensive empire of the Cālukya monarchs who are known in history as the Later Cālukyas or the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa. It enjoyed this position during the eleventh and the twelfth centuries. Bijjaḷa of the Kalacuri dynasty, who usurped the Cālukya kingdom in 1162 A.D., also made this city his capital. Bijjaḷa's successors too ruled here for a few years.

Basavēśvara's Vīraśaiva movement received firm support at Kalyāṇa where it grew from strength to strength. On account of this event it has attained sanctity as a pilgrimage centre for the followers of this faith.

This town must have been a place of some importance even before it was selected as their capital by the Cālukyas. This is seen from an inscription at Kalyāṇa itself. It is interesting to note that this epigraph speaks of a Jaina temple constructed at Kalyāṇa by Attimabbe, the reputed Jaina philanthropist and patron of the well known Kannaḍa poet Ranna. An inscription at Lakkuṇḍi near Gadag, in Dharwar district, dated 1007 A.D., informs that this lady built 1500 Jaina temples in various places. One of them must be at Kalyāṇa as mentioned above.

The historical sites at Kalyāṇa are not in a preserved state. They are in ruins, spread over extensive area including the adjoining villages of Śivapur, Nārāyaṇpur and Pratāpapur. Few secular antiquities have survived. No structural remains of the Cālukyan times, like the palace, administrative buildings and fortifications are extant. An open, slightly elevated spot is pointed out as the site of Bijjaḷa's palace. The three villages named above must have been formerly included in the capital city. Their names bear historical significance. Pratāpapur is reminiscent of the Cālukya title *Pratāpacakravarti*. Nārāyaṇapur appears to have been named after another Cālukya title *Rāyanārāyaṇa*. We shall refer to Śivapur later.

Inscriptions occupy an important place among the antiquities. Twenty-two of them, some in good condition and some damaged have been discovered in all. Majority of them are of the Cālukya rulers. One can be connected with Basavēśvara's circle of followers. No inscription of Bijjaḷa or rulers of his Kalacuri family has been found! This is rather strange. Could they have been all destroyed?

Glimpses of the political, religious and economic life of the time are available from these inscriptions. A large number of temples of various persuasions and denominations must have adorned this capital city. However, names of only a few temples could be collected from the epigraphs. These belong to Jaina, Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva deities, the last named predominating. It would be interesting to mention the following: Bhimēśvara, Candraprabha, Hāṭakēśvara, Madhukēśvara, Mahākāleśvara, Paṁpēśvara and Rāvaṇa-Siddhālaya. The last one was apparently erected in honour of Rama's adversary Rāvaṇa who was a great Śaiva devotee. Generally speaking, temples dedicated to Rāvaṇa are very rare. The Rāvaṇa's shrine must have existed here in about the eleventh century.

Relics of structures of none of the temples alluded to above, or for that matter, of any other temples of the Cālukyan age could be traced. However, a large number of sculptures of the period, which must have originally belonged to them, have been discovered in several places. Though many of them have been picked up and deposited in the enclosure of the fort, they are in an indifferent

state of preservation. Notable among the surviving sculptures are Varāha, who was the tutelary deity of the Cālukyas, Naṭarāja, Bhairava, Sūrya, Mahiṣāsuramardini, Cauvisa Tīrthaṅkara, Anantaśayana, Kēśava with ten avatāras of Viṣṇu in the halo, Śiva-Pārvati and Rāvaṇa. It is of interest to note that two sculptures of Rāvaṇa have been found.

Antiquities relating to Basavēśvara and associated with his movement are found in a large number. An open site is pointed out as the mansion or residence of Basavēśvara. No structural remains have survived. In this site are seen two laterite caves, said to have been used by Basavēśvara for his religious worship and meditation. At some distance is another site said to have been the dwelling of Akka Nāgamma, mother of Cennabasavaṇṇa and elder sister of Basavēśvara. If the visitor gets down through the opening, he enters into a spacious underground temple excavated out of laterite rock. The front portion of the cave presents a decorative specimen of Cālukyan architecture. There stands a female image holding a fly-whisk in her hand inside the temple. This figure is inaptly identified with Akka Nāgamma.

Prabhudēvara Gaddige or the seat of Allama Prabhu is a late memorial structure erected in honour of Allama Prabhu, mystic saint and senior contemporary of Basavēśvara. It is both a shrine and a monastery, the main attraction of the pilgrims being a raised platform associated with this teacher. The establishment belongs to the monastic order of Viraktas or recluses.

Maḍivāḷa Mācayya of washerman community was a staunch adherent of Basavēśvara. On the site relating to this devotee stands an old shrine of Śiva and a modern memorial structure comprising an arched Nandimaṇṭapa. Mācayya is said to have washed the clothes of Śaiva devotees in a tank near about.

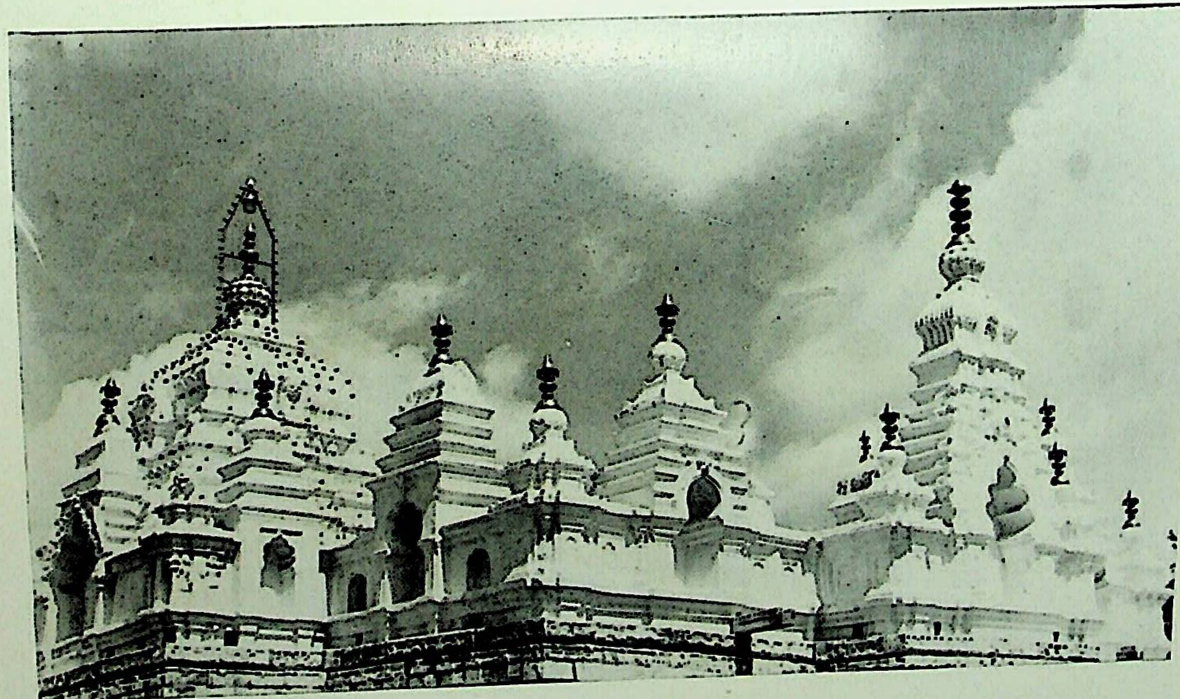
The temple of Tripurāntaka Śiva was far-famed among the temples of Kalyāṇa. This is often mentioned in the Vīraśaiva literary works including the Sayings of Cennabasavaṇṇa. On the site of this establishment now stands a small shrine of this deity. Near by



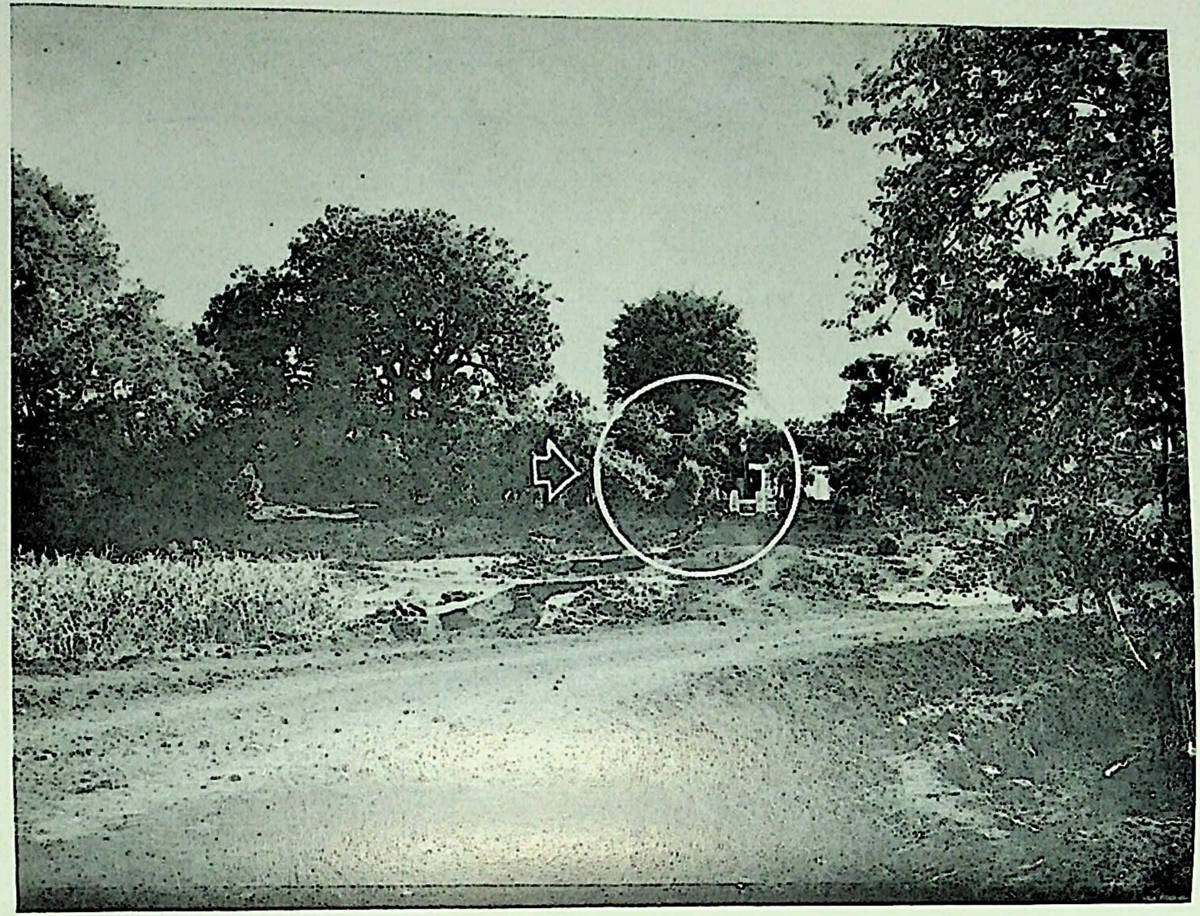
Śrī Saṅgamēśvara Temple—Basavana Bagēwādi (Bijapur Dt.)



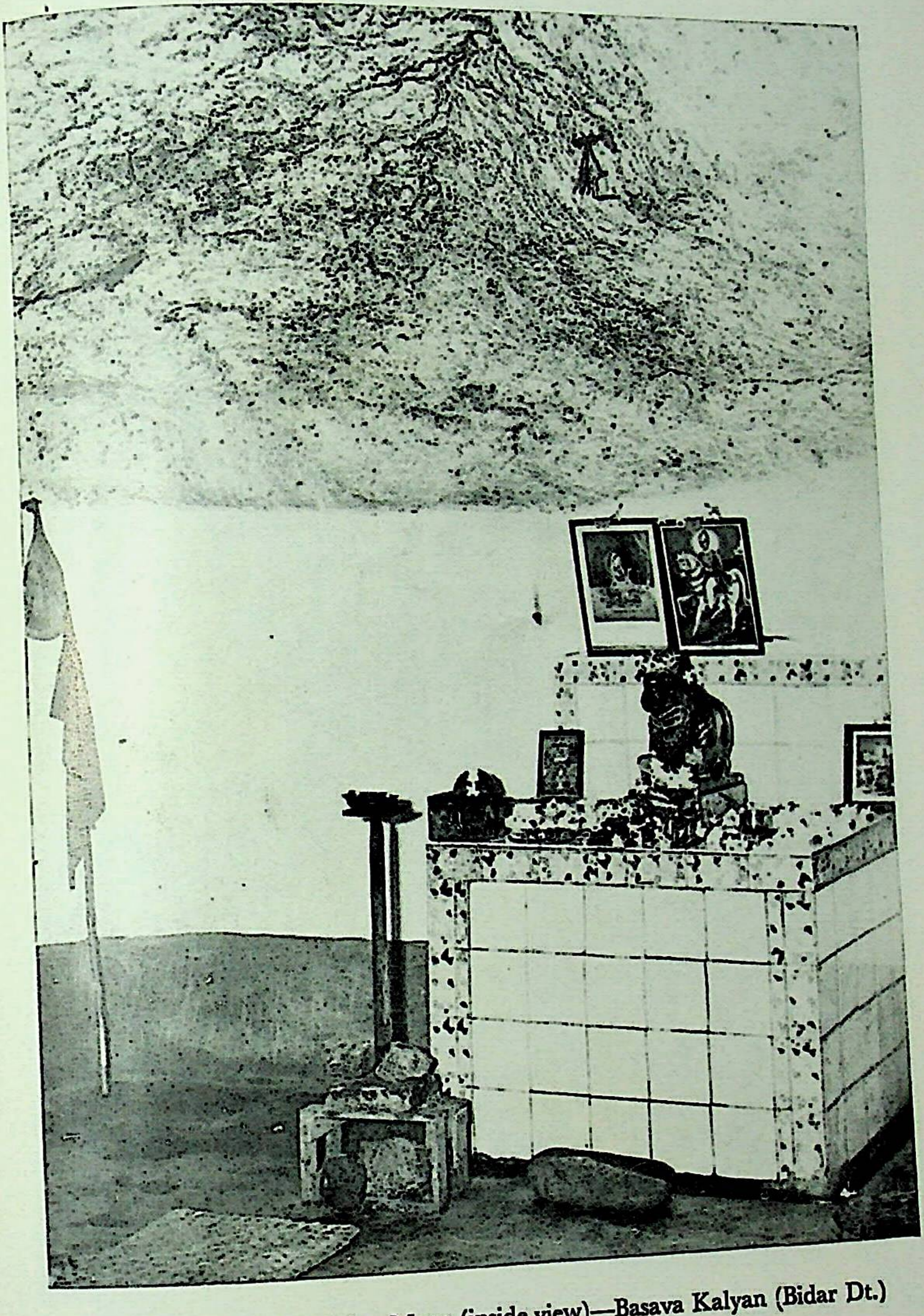
A view of Saṅgamēśvara Temple — Kūḍala Saṅgama (Bijapur Dt.)



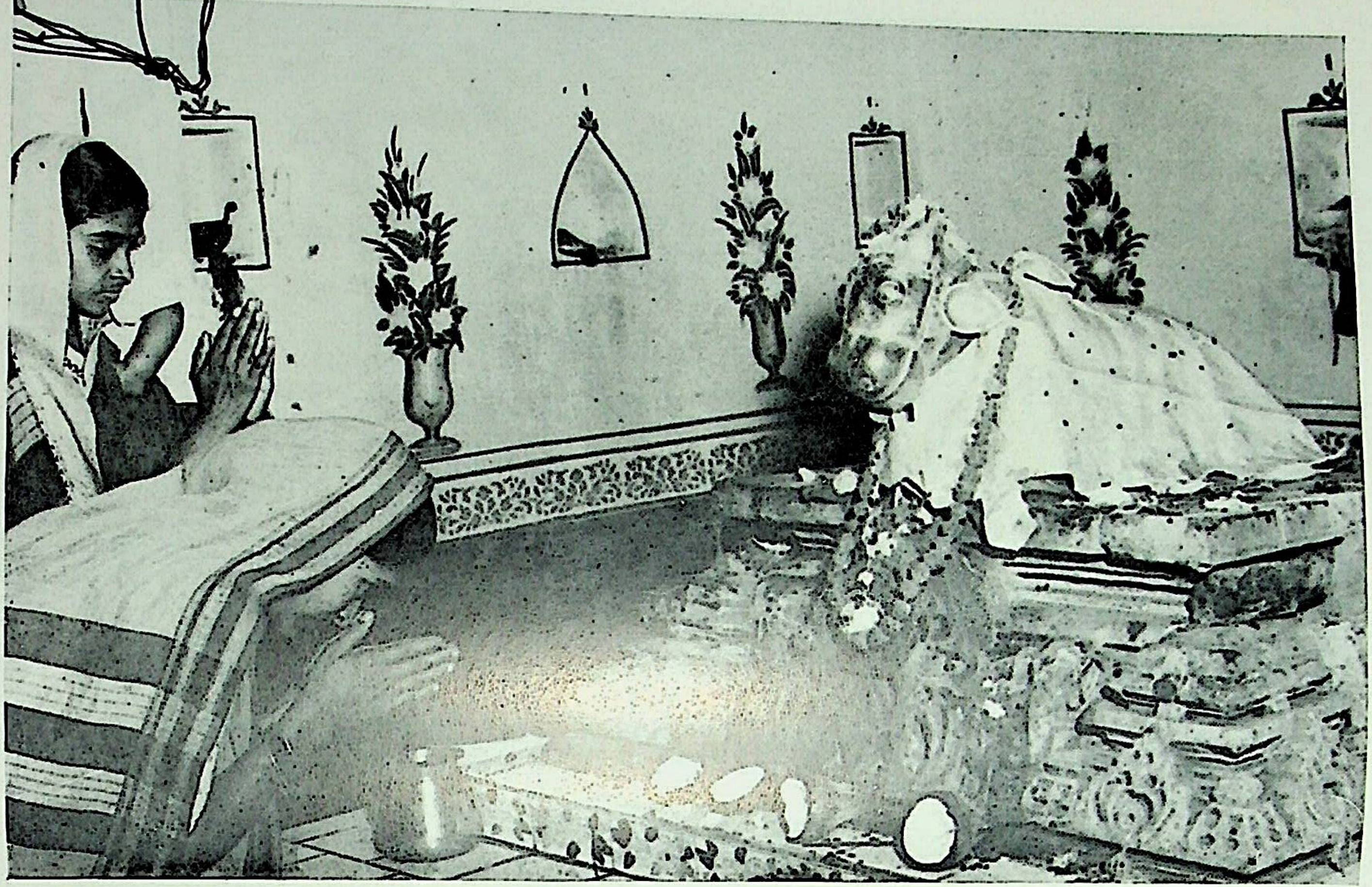
Gōpuram of Śrī Saṅgamēśvara Temple — Kūḍala Saṅgama (Bijapur Dt.)



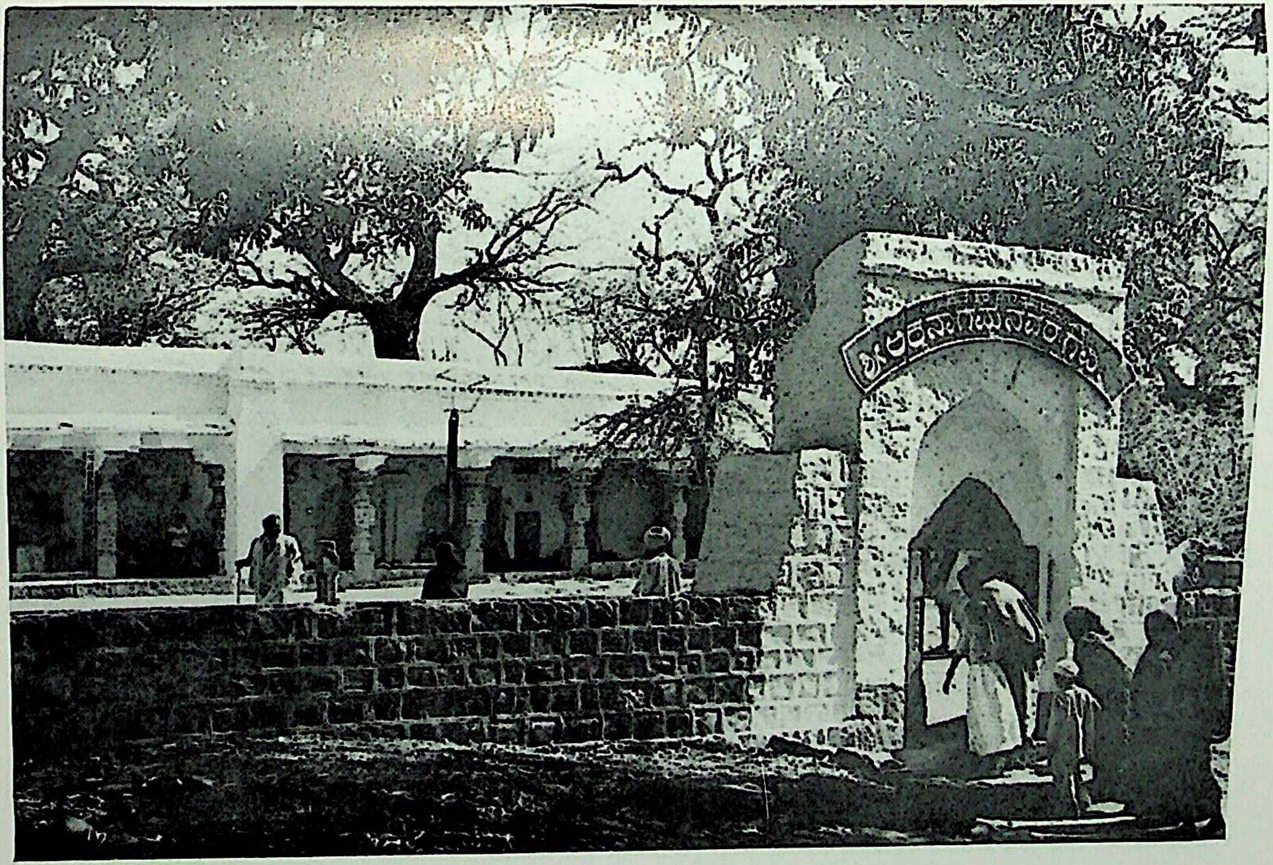
Śrī Basavēśvar's Arivina Mane — A Distant View — Basava Kalyān (Bidar Dt.)
This cave was used by Śrī Basavēśvara for his religious worship and meditation



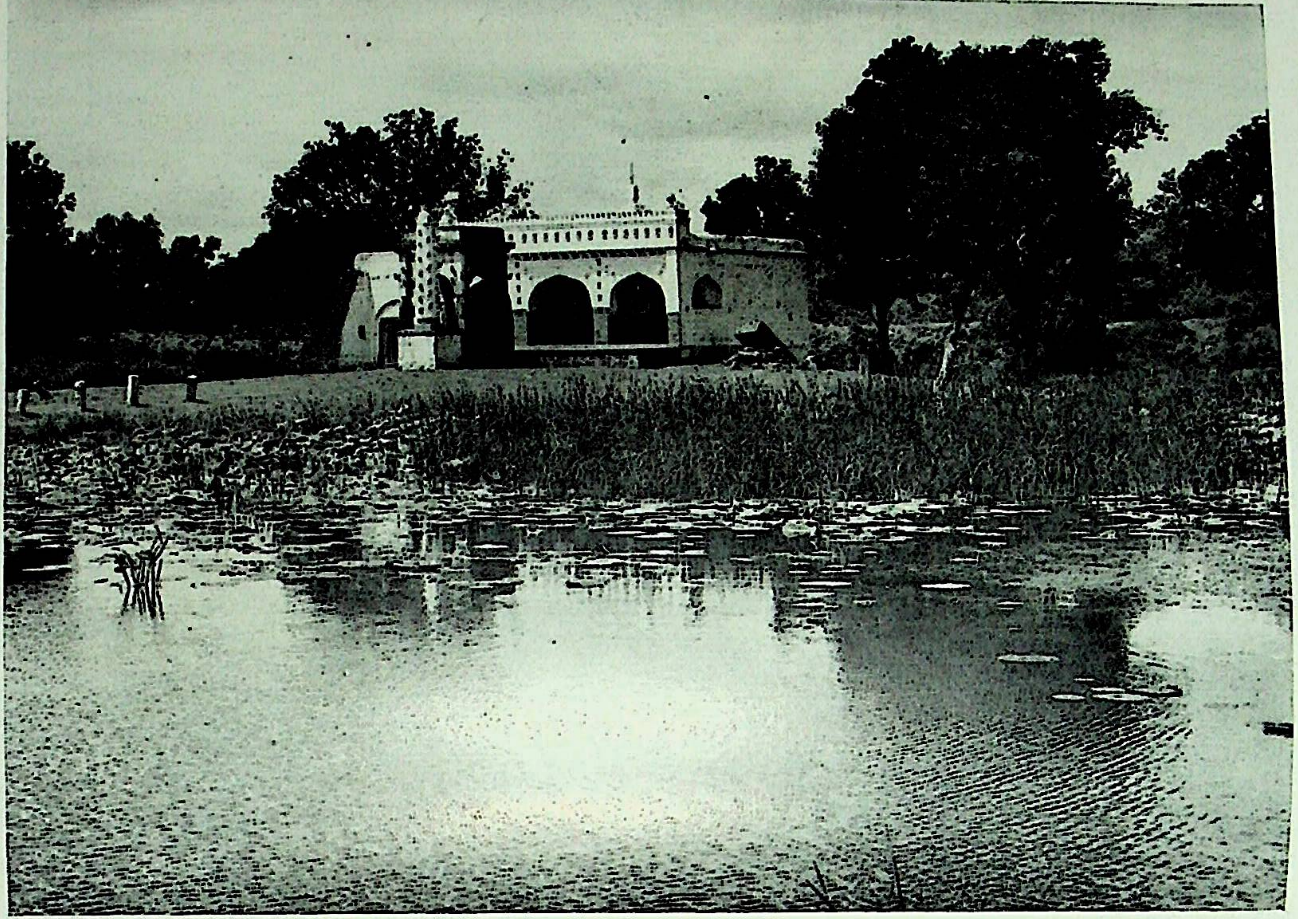
Śrī Basavēśvara's Arivina Mane (inside view)—Basava Kalyan (Bidar Dt.)



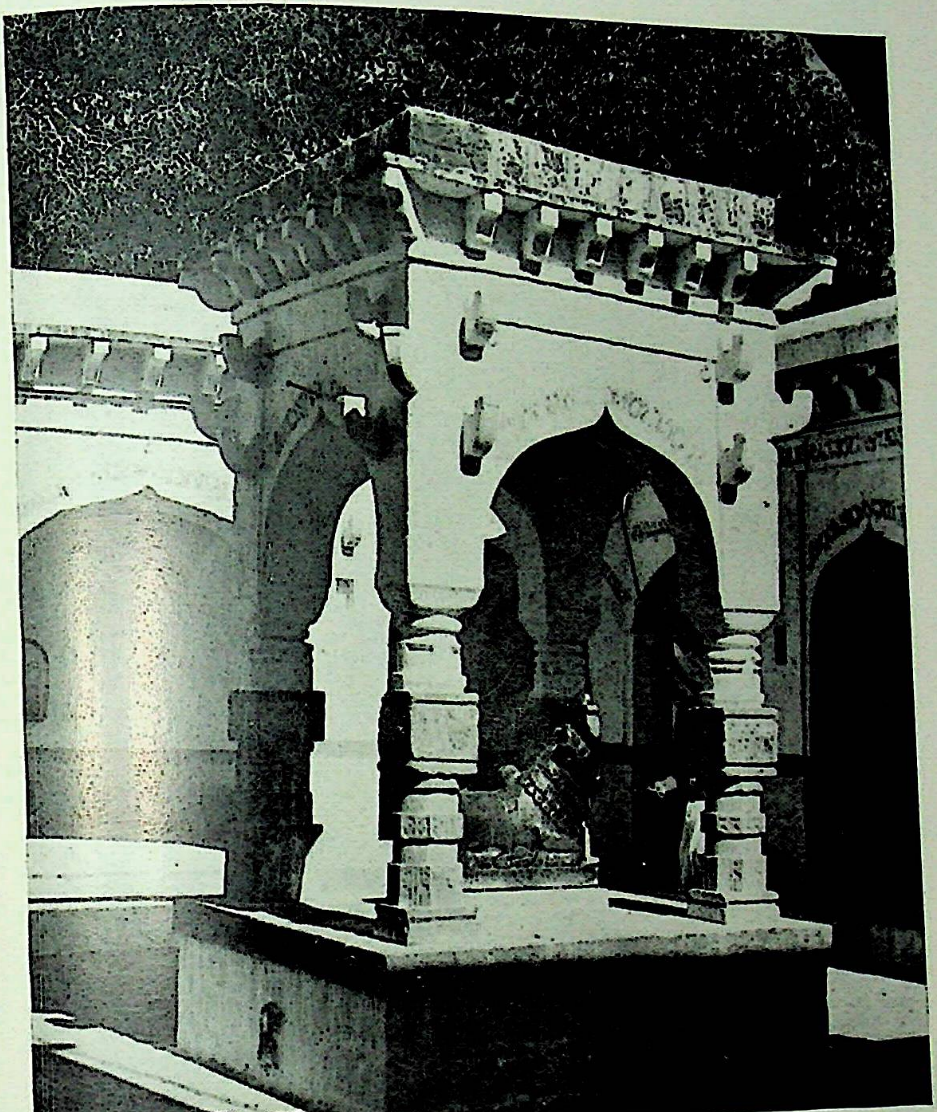
Paruṣa Kaṭṭe—Basava Kalyāṇ (Bidar Dt.)
From this spot Śrī Basavēśvara distributed money to the devotees.



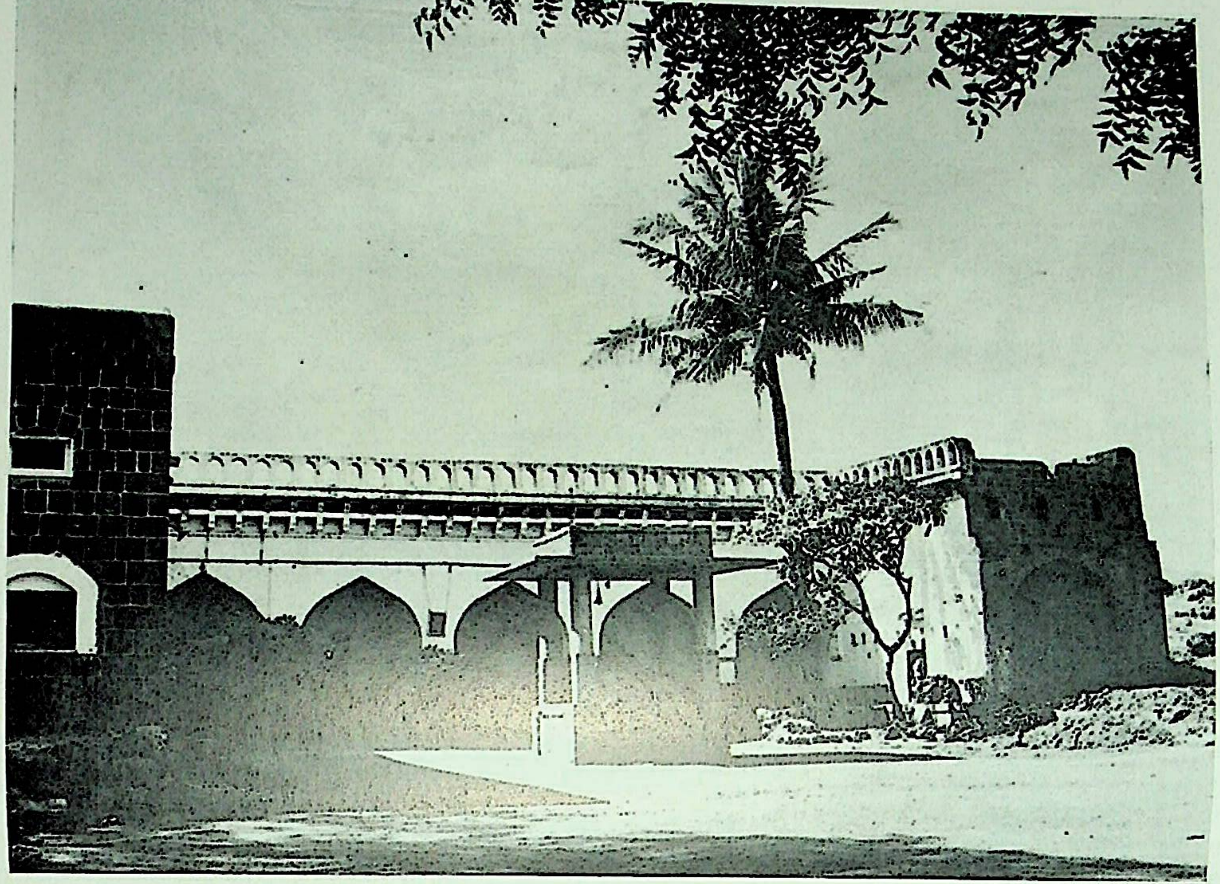
Akka Nāgamma's Cave — Basava Kalyān (Bidar Dt.)
This cave was the dwelling of Akka Nāgamma, mother of Cennabasavaṇṇa and elder sister of Śrī Basavēśvara.



Śrī Maḍiwāḷa Mācidēva's tank—Basava Kalyān (Bidar Dt.)
Śrī Mācidēva washed the clothes of Śivaśaraṇas in this tank.



Śrī Prabhudēva's Mutt—Basava Kalyān (Bidar Dt.)



Śrī Rudramuni Śivācārya (Vijñanēśvar, the author of Mitākṣara)Gadduge—Basava Kalyāṇ (Bidar Dt.)



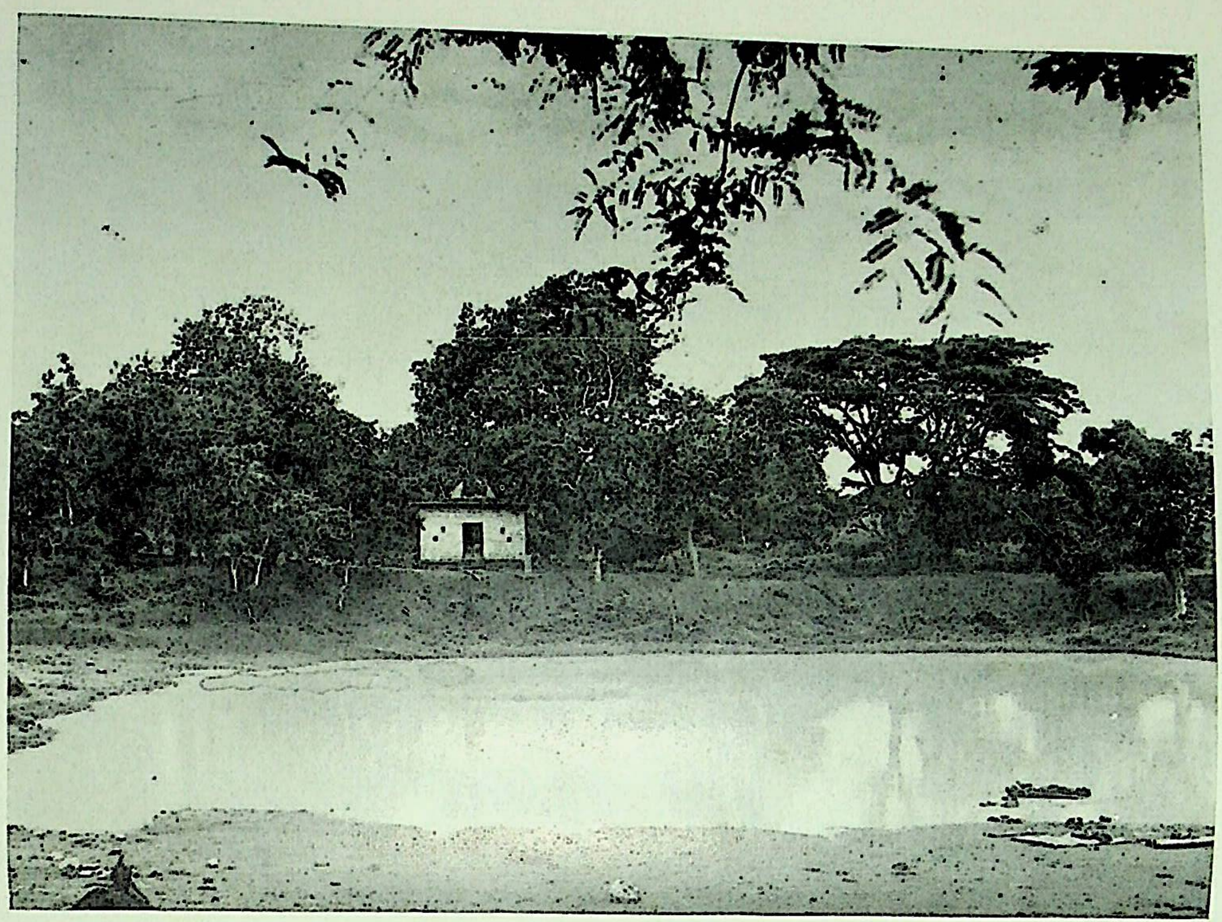
Nīlāmbikā (Wife of Śrī Basavēśvara) Temple at Taṅgaḍagi, near Kūḍala Saṅgama (Bijapur Dt.)



A front view of Cennabasavēśvara's Mahāmane Cave — Uḷavi (Karwar Dt.)



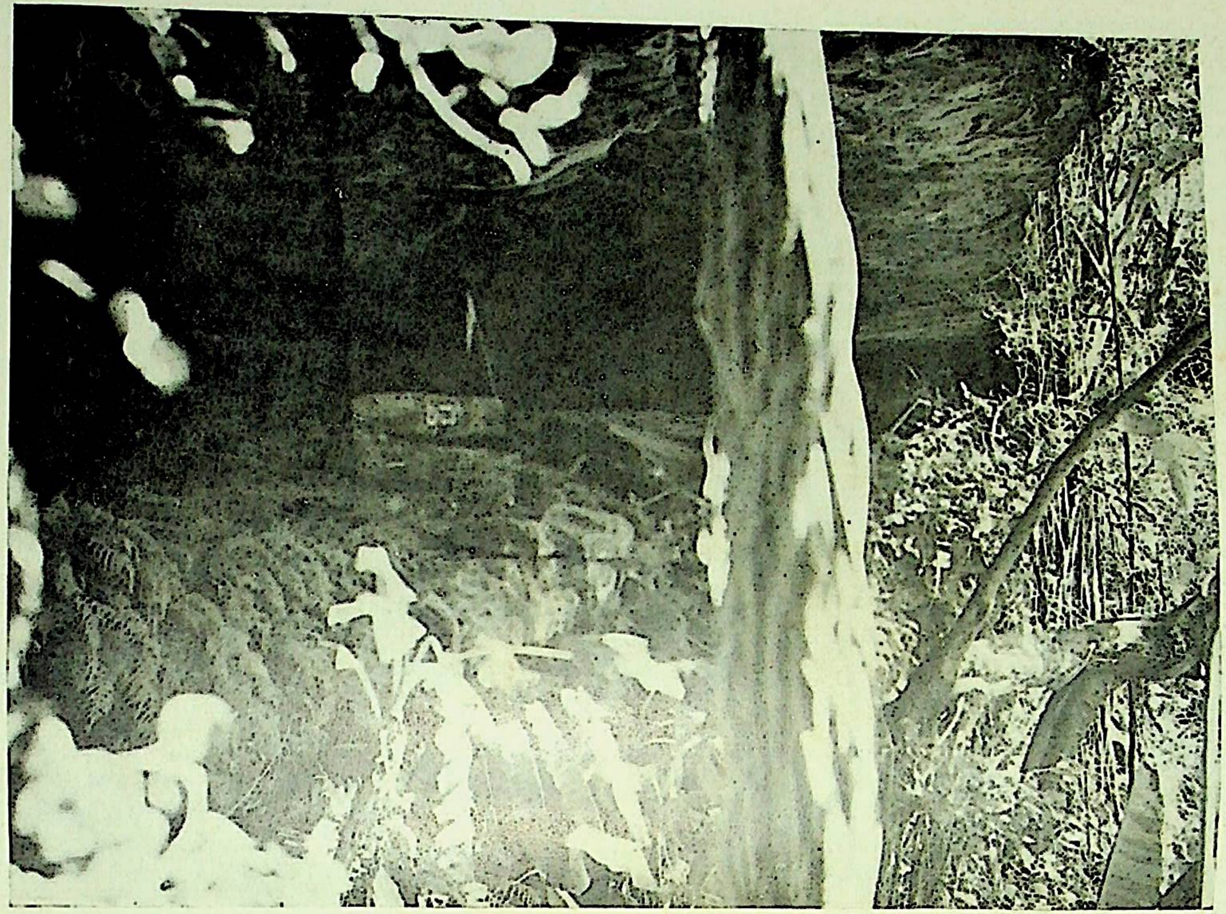
Śrī Kēdārēśvara Temple—Baḷḷigāve (Shimoga Dt.)



Śrī Paradēśi Mallappa's Temple—Uḍutaḍi (Shimoga Dt.)



Śrī Siddharāmēśvara Temple—Sholapur (Maharastra State)



A view of a cave in the Kadaḷi Vana—Śrīśaila (Andhra State)

are a few dwellings of a locality and a big tank both named after the god.

It is of great interest to note here the discovery of an important inscription newly found near the Tripurāntaka tank. The epigraph speaks of a gift made by Basava, the royal washerman of king Taila III, to Maḍivāḷa Mākeya who is most probably Maḍivāḷa Mācayya mentioned above. Though the record is not explicitly dated, it can approximately be assigned to 1160 A.D.

A number of well dressed stone pillars of a Hindu religious establishment are set up on a platform in the precincts of Pir's *Durgah* containing tombs of the Nawabs, or Muslim chiefs, of Kalyāṇa. A few early inscriptions also were noticed here. The pillars are said to have originally belonged to Anubhava Maṇṭapa. But this cannot be verified.

A raised platform called Paruṣa-Gaṭṭi is associated with Basavēśvara who, according to tradition, distributed money to the devotees from this spot. According to another version he initiated his disciples from this pulpit. *Paruṣa* means the miraculous touchstone which turned iron into gold. It is interesting to note that six-fold unique powers (*paruṣa*) associated with the person, mind, sense, movement, sight and speech of Basavēśvara are mentioned in the *Siṅgirāja Purāṇa* (sandhi vii, verse 45).

At Śivapura stands a temple of Śiva said to have been erected to perpetuate the memory of the great Saint, Siddharāma who visited Kalyāṇa from Sonnalige (modern Sholapur).

A number of spots including underground caves hallowed by the memories of Basavēśvara's companions and followers are scattered round about Kalyāṇa, some of them being even miles away. To mention a few: cave of Ghanaliṅga Rudramuni, son of Rēvaṇasiddha, cave of Nuliya Candayya, cave of Mugdha Saṅgayya, cave of Aṁbigara Cauḍayya, cave of Haraḷayya, cave of Mōḷigeya Mārayya. It is not unlikely that many of these were constructed or established at a later period to preserve the memories of the illustrious Vīraśaiva devotees who participated and contributed in Basavēśvara's movement.

The above brief sketch of the antiquities is based on my investigations and study carried out in the course of my visits to Kalyāṇa in 1956 and 1960.

Adverting to Basavēśvara's connection with Kalyāṇa where he spent the busiest part of his life propagating the new faith, the period appears to stretch roughly from 1153 to 1167 A.D. This surmise, though it runs counter to the literary accounts, is supported by epigraphical evidence.

After ransacking the epigraphical sources which afford many details about Bijjaḷa and his family and perusing the relevant literary works, it appears to me that the historical facts are like this:

Basavēśvara's experiment with his new movement at Maṅgaḷavāḍa convinced him that it was welcome to the many sections of the society, though opposed by vested interests. In order to enlist wider sympathies and support for his doctrine he went to Kalyāṇa. At this juncture the Cālukya sovereignty was dwindling and Bijjaḷa's power was increasing. As Bijjaḷa was not prepared to precipitate a complete break and open conflict with Basavēśvara who had established himself as a strong popular leader, the former ostensibly feigned to maintain friendly relations with the latter. Basavēśvara, intent upon promoting his doctrine which received vast response and gained enormous strength within a short time, assumed an attitude of dignified indifference towards Bijjaḷa.

But the clash was inevitable. Bijjaḷa wreaked his vengence on two faithful adherents of Basavēśvara by inflicting cruel punishment. The situation became fatefully explosive. Bijjaḷa was murdered some time after March 1168 A.D. as indicated by epigraphical evidence. According to one tradition which seems more plausible, Basavēśvara left Kalyāṇa about three months earlier and was merged with his God at Saṅgama. This would have taken place approximately in December 1167 A.D.

It may be added that, if not a sheer coincidence, the fifteen years' stay of Basavēśvara in Kalyāṇa is compatible with the period of his most significant activities relating to Anubhava Maṇṭapa as indicated by literary traditions.

The above reconstruction, it must be admitted, is at variance with the prevalent notions based on the Purāṇas which narrate all the occurrences in Basavēśvara's career as taking place in Kalyāṇa only. But if we look into the question from a historical perspective, we realise that the Purāṇas whose avowed intention and purpose was to sing the glories of the teacher in more or less legendary fashion, have less regard for historical sequence or accuracy. The picture presented by these works is partial and fragmentary. Hence there is justification for a modern historian, if he seeks the help of other reliable sources to draw the portrait of Basavēśvara in true details. It is not in respect of Basavēśvara alone that we are confronted with such conflicting accounts. There are many similar instances in ancient Indian and Karnāṭaka history.

P. B. DESAI

Compassionate one, effacer of my births,
Compassionate one, destroyer of my births,
When my life's bondage ceased to be,
Lord, I believed you are indeed
Śiva — my ground and goal.
Because you burnt my eightfold pride,
I found your gracious feet with confidence.
Lord of Creation, I believe in you:
Have mercy upon me, Kūḍala Saṅgama Lord !*

BASAVEŚVARA AND DEMOCRACY

It is often said that democracy is the call of the people. When people voice their opinions, ventilate their thoughts and give vent to their feelings, then democracy starts functioning. In all forms of government, monarchical, bureaucratic, autocratic, aristocratic, parliamentary, socialistic etc., the voice of the people is taken into account directly or indirectly. Democracy is thus as old as humanity. The voice of the people may be less heard in absolute monarchy or least heard in the tribal state. Still, democracy is alive even in such governments. No one can suppress for long the wishes and feelings of the people.

In India, democracy had its halcyon days in the Vedic times. For people had little scope to express their ideas since society was fettered by the Varṇāśrama-dharma which was buttressed by the Manusmṛti. If we closely scrutinise the Smṛtis of Yājñyavalkya and Manu and the moral codes like Śukra Nīti etc., we find that they contemplated rigid sections in the Society based on Varṇāśrama-dharma which resulted in enslaving large sections of society by the privileged classes. Hence it is no wonder that Buddhism and Jainism emerged as great forces to free the people from the bondage of slavery which was embedded in the Vedic Varṇāśrama-dharma.[1]

Buddhism influenced humanity for nearly a thousand years. Since Buddhism failed to develop its positive aspect, Indian society

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1 Vide *Dialectic Thought in Ancient India* — B. N. Dasagupta.

fell back and beat a retreat for a few centuries. The voice of the people was curbed. The Manusmṛti was revised with harsh injunctions so much so that Hindus were not allowed even to tour the foreign countries.[2]

It was at this crucial juncture that Basava, the leader of the Liṅgāyats or Vīraśaivas, rose. Basava was a free thinker and could assail the castle of the Varṇāśrama-dharma in a number of ways. Under his inspiring leadership hundreds of saints (including many women saints) took part in the movement which was democratic in spirit and form. The movement took place in the middle of the 12th century during the reign of Bijjaḷa the Kalacuri King at Kalyāṇa. Basava vehemently denounces the caste distinction in one of his vacanas as under:

Why hate a lowborn
When thou art born of a dirty womb?
How can a man be of a low caste
If he takes home a dead animal?
Thou takest a goat and killest in a Temple!
The Śāstra resorts to goat killing:
But the Śaraṇas of our Kūḍala Saṅgama
Are bereft of all Karma!

The spirit of the Liṅgāyat Movement was democratic in the sense that people of all castes and callings had access in the shaping of society and religion. The discussions and discourses, the dialogues and debates were conducted in the religious academy called Anubhava Maṇṭapa at Kalyāṇa. Basava, Allama Prabhu, Cenna Basava, Siddharāma, Maḍiwāḷa Māciděva, Bācarasa and a host of other saints were discussing the fundamentals of Vīraśaivism —thus evolving a new faith. Even women saints like Akka Mahādēvi, Satyakka, Akka Nāgamma, Gaṅgāṁbike, Rāṇi Mahādēvi, Śāṁbhavi Dēvi took part in the deliberations of the religious academy. Hence Vīraśaivism was a result of such deep deliberations and discussions.

The Liṅgāyat concept of history is that history is not the story

2 Vide *The Lingayat Movement* — Dr. S. M. Hunashal

of kings and queens but it is the story of the common people, 'the simple annals of the people as a whole'.

Basava's attitude towards life is critical and robust. He analyses the traditional lore and social structure and exposes their drawbacks, so that people may think of eradicating them and evolving new principles and doctrines. Hence he says:

Regard ye Śāstra as great?
It preaches Karma.
Think ye Veda superior?
It teaches animal slaughter.
Hold ye Smṛti supreme?
It is blind and cannot find.
All these thou transcendest,
For social service is thy stamp,
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

Basava recognised and respected the individuality of each and every one. From the highest to the lowest all have equal access to divinity. Woman has an equal status with man so that sex differentiation in matters religious and social, was put a stop to. Hence as many as forty women saints were authoresses of vacanas and discussed the religious doctrines with the saints like Basava, Cenna Basava, Allama Prabhu and Siddharāma. Hence observes Basava:

Tho' dwelling under an humble thatch
Magnanimous is the heart of a Śaraṇa.
Purity flows in every touch of his
And bravery throbs in every limb
Ah! So poor, so meek he is!
How free and independent his way,
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

Forbid me in thy name,
And in the name of thy Śaraṇas,
If I, thy devotee's caste, desire to know
When he comes to my dwelling.
From Brahmin down to Śūdra
All are equal,
If they be thy devotees,
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

One who kills an animal is low born:
There is nothing like caste or creed.
Śaraṇas alone are high born,
For they wish good to all animate beings.
Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama.

Basava emphatically asserts that a Brahmin is not born just to read the Veda and the Śāstra, nor is Kṣatriya, meant to kill and be merry and that trading is not the monopoly of a Vaiśya. Basava takes into account the initiative of the individual in deciding his vocation. Each individual is free to choose his vocation in life. That is his birth right. Irrespective of birth, a man becomes a blacksmith by heating iron, becomes a washerman by washing clothes; he becomes a goldsmith by tinkering gold. Hence people of all castes and callings joined the Vīraśaiva community.

From the above account, it is clear that Basava's concept of Society is basically democratic. The democratic approach is ingrained in his thought and action.

Democracy is based on the highest moral principle that the legitimate wishes or aspirations of the people must be respected. Other forms of Government ignore this moral principle to their cost. If an administrasion does not respond to the call of the people, then it cannot survive long. If the moral philosophy is progressive, political administration becomes democratic, otherwise the rule becomes autocratic. The progress and prosperity of an empire or a nation cannot be judged by the power and pomp of the palace but by the high moral standard of the people living in it. Basava did not hesitate to tender his resignation to the ministership when he found that King Bijjaḷa was not prepared to do away with social inequalities and establish a society based on democratic principles.

Again Basava's teachings were based on the highest ethical principles. He did not aspire for any name or fame, power or position. His greatest desire was to be of service to the common man.

I do not desire for the status of Brahma,
Nor do I hanker after the position of Viṣṇu,
Neither do I aspire for the rank of Rudra.

Oh! Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama, bless me with
The status of knowing and serving thy devotees.

Look at the dispassionate and detached attitude of the saint! Basava did not hanker for power but looked upon his high position as an opportunity to serve the common man.

The moral government enunciated by Aristotle finds a parallel in the religious parliament called Anubhava Maṇṭapa of Basava's days.

But in contrast to Aristotle's aristocratic state, Basava shaped a social democratic state. Though moral good was the basis of both, virtue would be practised more freely in a democratic state than in an aristocratic one. The concept of Aristotle's state would be dictatorial and authoritarian, while that of Basava was democratic and social. Basava, though a minister to the king, was not afraid of him. We find him saying, "May I fear that Bijjaḷa as I fear you, O Lord Kūḍala Saṅgama?" Consequently Basava's revolutionary teachings began to create some fear in the mind of Bijjaḷa, the autocratic ruler. That is the ideological background of the rift between Basava and King Bijjaḷa. In political terminology, it was a struggle between monarchy and democracy.[3]

The Vīraśaiva movement was based on the uplift and equality of the masses by abolishing the class system from society based on Varṇāśrama. Basava fought for the rights of the common man. Unlike Plato, Basava did not divide society into the classes of intellectuals and the mass of manual workers. He did not advocate the social maxim of philosophy for the few and mythology for the many, but held philosophy to be the right of every human being. Hence Basava's 'Anubhava Maṇṭapa' was composed of scholars and philosophers hailing from the rank and file of the populace.

Thus Basava envisaged a religion and a social order in which there would be no barriers of caste or creed, no distinction between the rich and the poor. Thus we find that the teachings of Basava are imbued with democratic ideals.

S. M. HUNASHAL

3 Ibid.

The supple snake
glides along and slips
into the anthill;
The zig - zag river's course
but points to the sea;
and the devotee's way,
so crooked seeming,
just lead to you,
O Lord, Kuḍala Saṅgama !

BASAVĒŚVARA — SAVIOUR OF THE DOWNTRODDEN

Śrī Basavēśvara's message is such as to spur one and all to the right way of living, of being faithful to God and helpful to man.

An attempt is made here to convey the quintessence of his message of universal love and brotherhood, right conduct and devotion to God. In the tumult of an active and many-sided life as a Minister of State, as an administrator, as a philosopher and religious reformer, as a man of letters and mystic and, above all, as a great progressive eader he has left his impress in all walks of life by teaching men the art of right living evolving a truthful synthesis of the fundamentals of all religious faiths demonstrating their intrinsic harmony and unity in diversity. Basavēśvara moulded Vīraśaivism as a progressive path of religion emphasising universal love and right conduct as the sine qua non for attaining happiness in this world and salvation the next. In all humility he proclaimed that he was the lowliest of the lowly and that Śivaśaraṇas, Men of God, were the highest. Eight hundred years ago, Basavēśvara embarked on the very bold venture of religious and social reform which anticipated all the Gandhian ideals and constructive programmes. With great zeal, fervour and fearlessness he brought into being the New Order of Society. He reformed society, resurrected theism, educated and elevated the common man and woman to follow the path of devotion and right conduct.

The distinctive feature of Basavēśvara's mysticism is that though he was one of the great mystics he warned against impostors and

pretenders who were masquerading the country as mystics and prescribed the meticulous observance of the five ācāras by every follower of his principles viz., *Śadācāra, Liṅgācāra, Śivācāra, Gaṇācāra, Bhṛtyācāra* which denote the ways of right living to spur *Vīraśaivas* to be true to God and man.

Basavēśvara occupies a unique place in the unbroken chain of mystics of the world. Sufi, Christian, Hindu mystics like Kabir, Tukārām, Tamil Nāyanārs, Āḷwārs, Akka Mahādevi, Mīrābāi and Andal have poured out their hearts in songs of devotion and fused "poetical and mystical ecstasy into a single flame." They have proclaimed the fundamental Truth underlying all religions and have given vent to seemingly baffling belief in a cosmos — self-controlled, ordered and purposive macrocosm governed by divine order, faith and harmony — which attracts man's individual soul (microcosm) to become one with it, just as a lover draws his beloved for the sweet bliss of union. This is the doctrine of *Śaraṇa sati, Liṅga pati* akin to the doctrine of Platonic love.

> Your great illusion
> Envelops the world;
> My fragile mind
> Just apprehends you.
> If you be strong,
> Then I'm stronger still.
> Even as a mirror the elephant
> holds in miniature,
> My mind holds you,
> O Lord, Kūḍala Saṅgama.

The message of this great man of the 12th century is akin to the message of Mahatma Gandhi of the 20th century. So striking is the similarity between their social philosophies that one is apt to forget the gulf of eight hundred years that yawns between their periods.

This aspect of the life and teachings of Basavēśvara was not recognised in his own home-land till a great oriental scholar, the late Sir James Campbell, drew the attention of all towards it as early as 1918. He said "It was the distinctive feature of his (Basava's)

mission that while illustrious religious and social reformers in India before him had each laid emphasis on one or the other item of religious and social reform, either subordinating more or less other items to it or ignoring them altogether, Basava sketched and boldly tried to work out a large and comprehensive programme of social reform with the elevation and independence of womanhood as its guiding point. Neither the social conferences which are annually held in these days in several parts of India; nor the Indian social reformers can improve upon that programme as to the essentials. The present day social reformer in India is but speaking the language and seeking to enforce the mind of Basava."

Since then a galaxy of gifted authors and research scholars have, after years of patient labour, unearthed the hidden treasure of his life and salvaged the *vacana* literature which enjoys the pride of place in Kannaḍa literature. This vacana literature is nothing but the spontaneous out-pourings of the thoughts and ideas of Basavēśvara and his associates, a host of God-intoxicated free thinkers, both men and women, representing all strata of society. This movement spread to the surrounding regions and everywhere the fallen and the forsaken found in it the hope of their emancipation from the age-long evils that reigned over society in the name of religion and began to trace their way towards Kalyāṇa the seat of this new awakening under the leadership of Basavēśvara.

Basavēśvara showed the downtrodden masses the way of man's integral self-transcendence through his vacanas couched in their own mother-tongue, Kannaḍa, and brought about the greatest revolution in India after the Buddha.

Prof. K. S. Srikantan has said regarding Basava: "It is no exaggeration to say that the message of Basava is like a reservoir into which all previous thoughts flowed in and from which all later thoughts flowed out. Kind like Buddha, simple like Mahavir, gentle like Jesus, bold like Mahammed, Basava strikes us almost as a wonder of creation. But what attracts us most to him are those

teachings of his in which he anticipated the greatest of modern thinkers — Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi."

G. M. GANGANNA

SECTION : SIX

Of this, Thou and Thy saints
be witness as I avow—
that I keep no store
neither for today or tomorrow,
be it a strand of gold
Or a shred of cloth.
All that I have and possess
but to Śaraṇas alone belong.
Lorh Kūḍala Saṅgama.§

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***

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Compiler

***For further details regarding the above mentioned titles vide *'Basava Sāhitya Darpaṇa'* by the same author, published by Basava Samiti, Bangalore, 1967.

I fear nor creeping snake,
nor consuming fires,
nor the poniard's edge.
I fear only, and shun
the lust for another's wife,
the greed for another's pelf.
Save me from these,
O Lord, Kudala Sangama !

SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION

Vowels	Devanāgari	अ आ इ ई उ ऊ ऋ ॠ ऌ ॡ ए ऐ ओ औ
	Kannaḍa	ಅ ಆ ಇ ಈ ಉ ಊ ಋ ೠ ಎ ಏ ಐ ಒ ಓ ಔ
	Roman	a ā i ī u ū ṛ ṝ lṛ lṝ e ē ai o ō au
anusvāra	Devanāgari	अं
	Kammaḍa	ಅಂ
	Roman	aṁ
visarga	Devanāgari	अः
	Kannḍa	ಅಃ
	Roman	aḥ

Consonants

vetars	क	ख	ग	घ	ङ
(*guttarals*)	ಕ	ಖ	ಗ	ಘ	ಙ
	ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa
palatals	च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
	ಚ	ಛ	ಜ	ಝ	ಞ
	ca	cha	ja	jha	ña
retroflex	ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण
(*cerebrals*)	ಟ	ಠ	ಡ	ಢ	ಣ
	ṭa	ṭha	ḍ	ḍha	ṇa
dentals	त	थ	द	ध	न
	ತ	ಥ	ದ	ಧ	ನ
	ta	tha	da	dha	na

labials	प फ ब भ म	ಪ ಫ ಬ ಭ ಮ	pa pha ba bha ma
semi-vowels	य र ल व	ಯ ರ ಱ ಲ ವ	ya ra ṟa la va
sibilant	श	ಶ (*palatal*)	śa
sibilant	ष	ಷ (*retroflex*)	ṣa
sibilant	स	ಸ (*dental*)	sa
aspirate	ह	ಹ	ha
lateral	ळ	ಳ	ḷa
conjunct	क्ष	ಕ್ಷ	kṣa
	ज्ञ	ಜ್ಞ	jña

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5. *Sri H. P. Malledevaru*, *See* P. 517.

INDEX

C

L

M

N

O

P

S

W

Y

Z

If but the thought of doing well
Flashes into my mind,
God's laughter haunts me like a bell
Down the wind !
The surest way
Is not to say:
The Godhead never heeds
The vaunted deeds.
It's only when I find
No trace
Within my mind —
No conscious thought
Of what I've wrought,
Then only shall He hear
And grace my prayer ! *

It required the insight of a philosopher, the boldness of a prophet, the earnestness of a reformer and the drive of a man of action to sweep the dust off the minds of men and give them a fresh outlook. That was what Basava did in those early days in the twelfth century in Karnātak.

R. R. DIWAKAR

Today several clouds seem to gather strength on the horizon of India and common men and women look perplexed and frustrated and show symptoms of gathering anger and indignation. At such a time in the history of India, I think all of us can go back to Basava and seek guidance, inspiration and light from his philosophy. If Basava's philosophy is properly understood and interpreted to the common men and women of India, it will help the country in its onward march in search of happiness, social equality and spiritual good.

P. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR

Without entering into the contraversies of the life incidents of Basava we can say that Basava was a social reformer, a great administrator, humanist, a spiritual leader and in a fact a prophet. He strove, like all other prophets, to lighten the burden of suffering humanity and make this earth a heaven for men.

T. G. KALGHATGI

On the whole we must look for Gandhi's forerunners in the leaders of sects, the men who 'cleared paths' and opened up ways. In the middle ages and upto the present there are examples of such men coming from all social and spiritual strata, gathering communities about them, adopting new gospels, sometimes trying to make their way in the social and political field by means which they invariably claimed to derive from the gospels. Such are Basava the 12th century with the Liṅgayats,......

LOUIS RENOU

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